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Georgia Journal of College Student Affairs

Georgia College Personnel Association (GCPA)

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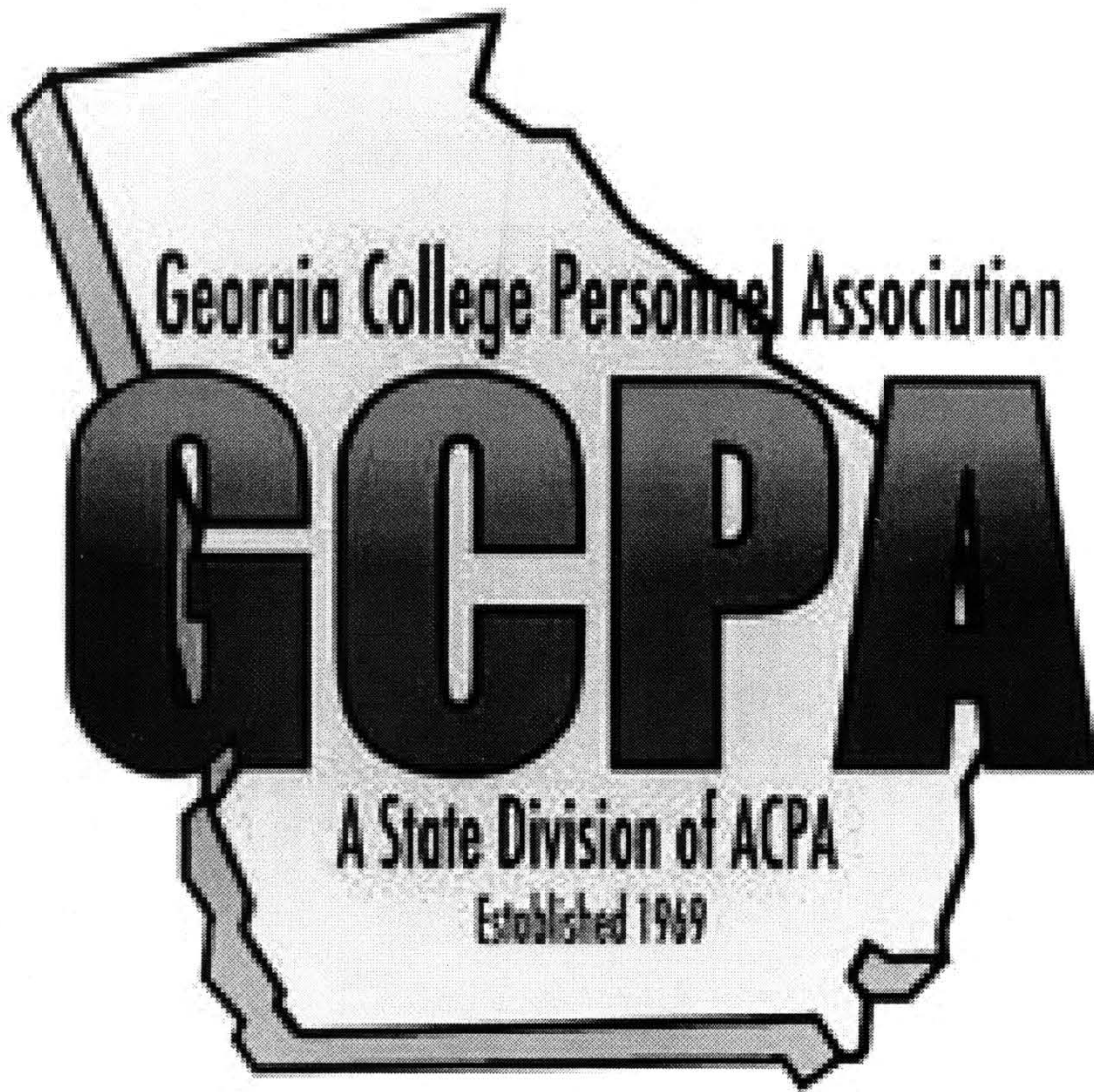


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**Georgia Journal of College
Student Affairs
2013**

Georgia College Personnel Association

(GCPA)

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MEET THE EDITOR

Dr. Brenda Marina is an Associate Professor for Educational Leadership and Director for the Higher Education Administration programs in the College of Education at Georgia Southern University. She holds a doctorate degree in Secondary Education and a Master degree in Higher Education Administration. She completed her Bachelor of Science degree in Technical Education and an Associate of Science degree in Radiologic Technology, all her degrees are from the University of Akron in Ohio. Dr. Marina has actively worked

in higher education and Higher education administration as a coordinator for educational centers, an academic advisor, and as an assistant dean. Her career as an educator includes teaching undergraduate students and graduate students, serving as an internship mentor and as a chairperson for dissertations. Dr. Marina's research interests include: Leadership through Mentoring, Women in Leadership, Multicultural Competence in Higher Education, and Global Education Issues. Her publications have included book chapters entitled "Managing Diversity in Communities, Workplaces, and Society" and "International Perspective on Accountability and Accreditation: Are We Asking the Right Questions. A recent publication in the peer-reviewed Journal of Pan African Studies is entitled "Servant Leaders Who Picked Up the Broken Glass". Dr. Marina holds professional affiliations at the state and national level and serves as a speaker and presenter for state, national, and international conferences on issues related to her research. She is married to Frank Marina Jr. They have one adult son, Frank Marina III, daughter-in-law, Shanna and a new grandson Frank IV. In her spare time, she coordinates a mentor program for young girls of diverse backgrounds.

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Georgia College Personnel Association ***Georgia Journal of College Student Affairs***

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Editor's Introduction

This issue of *GJCSA* is a critical dialogue about achievement and wellness in Higher Education and Student Affairs. The articles selected for this issue challenge our traditional ways of knowing and doing by considering different aspects of what constitutes “wellness” and “achievement”. The topics of discussion for this issue could be categorized into two distinct foci: student centered wellness and achievement and faculty centered wellness and achievement.

In the *Benefits and Barriers of Physical Activity among College Students*, Henshaw and Archibald move beyond the discussion of the importance of physical activity on college campuses to the role student affairs professionals play in supporting and promoting a physically active environment. With the *Influence of Alternative Break Program Participation on College Students' Development of Moral Reasoning*, Glassmann, Dunn, and Espino highlight a study which focused on community service programs and their impact on student development. The authors suggest that we as higher education and student affairs staff and faculty consider students' different backgrounds and experiences, including ethnicity and gender, when designing and recruiting for community service programs.

Moving from the student centered perspective, in *Skills and Perceptions of Entry-Level Staff Supervision*, Calhoun and Nasser Skills and provide valuable new information for student affairs professionals at all levels in general and for housing and residence life professionals in particular. The authors contend that as this profession evolves, institutions need to be cognizant of the critical components for the development of student affairs professionals. Transitioning to a leadership level discussion, in *The Organizational Commitment of Chief Housing Officers*, Erwin and Marina respond to a study by providing suggestions that may increase the likelihood of *Chief Housing Officers* being empowered in their work environment and wanting to continue in such roles where ambiguity and conflict are daily stressors. The authors were both disappointed and alarmed with demographic statistics of chief housing officers, as this field serves a diverse population of students and espouses the importance of diversity in education. Finally, Barnett Muilenburg, Johnson, and Miracle consider critical theory to reveal origins of oppression and encourage understanding in *It's not to be discussed: Safety, Acceptance, and Professional Development for LGBTQ Faculty at a Large Southeastern University*. The authors contend that administrative support and collaboration is vital to improving professional and personal wellbeing in higher education institutions.

Individually and collectively, the articles in this issue exemplify contemporary issues that impact and shape the landscape of teaching and learning, as well as research and service in higher education and student affairs. I thank the committed editorial board and reviewers for their continued work, which has allowed us to share another issue. I also thank the contributors to this issue, who considered this journal as an outlet for their research.

Brenda L. H. Marina

The Benefits and Barriers of Physical Activity among College Students

By

Berkley Henshaw and James G. Archibald

Abstract

The benefits and barriers of physical activity among college students play an important role in how to create a physically active environment (Brown, 2005). Many students feel the best benefit to exercising is to improve their physical appearance (English, 2007). Students have expressed that some of the barriers to physical activity are that recreational facilities are too far away, or the centers did have not activities in which students wanted to engage (Brown, 2005). Therefore, the purpose of this paper is to provide a brief overview of the benefits and challenges of physical activity for college students.

According to the DHHS, one third of adults in the United States do not participate in enough physical activity (Coronado, Sos, Talbot, Do & Taylor, 2010). "Physical inactivity is a serious health problem among university students," (Irwin, 2007, p.40). This poses a great danger to students who have serious health issues. "Thirty-seven percent of the college student population is overweight, with 11% being obese," (Berg, An, Ahluwalia, 2013, p. 389). Even though the benefits of participating in physical activity are proven to increase psychological and physiological health, many college students do not meet the minimal recommendations for physical activity (Kilpatrick, Herbert & Bartholomew, 2005). Obesity has increased among college students due to lack of exercise and sedentary lifestyle, such as long periods of sitting and inactivity (Bragg, Carolyn, Kaye & Desmond, 2009). "Specifically, weight gain in the first few years of college is becoming an important concern affecting the likelihood that more young adults are, or will become obese," (Gruber, 2008, p.557). On average, weight gain is greater among college students compared to the general population (English, 2009). However, students can improve their health by including exercise 5 days each week for 30 min (English, 2009). Students have an array of physical activity options available to them through campus recreational facilities; for example, recreational sports, games, weight lifting, swimming, or outdoor activities. These activities range from moderate to vigorous intensity levels (Coronado, Sos, Talbot, Do & Taylor, 2010). While it may appear simplistic to engage in these activities, there are challenges and barriers that can impede students from reaping the benefits of physical activity. The purpose of this paper is to provide a brief overview of the benefits and challenges of physical activity for college students.

Sex Differences in Physical Activities

According to English (2007), adults should engage in 2 hours and 30 minutes of moderate activity, an hour and 15 minutes of vigorous intense workouts or a combination of the two every week. Moderate activities are those that cause an increase one's heart rate and breath, and are maintained for an hour. Workouts that are considered to be vigorous in intensity should make one fatigue after 20 minutes with intensified heart rate and breathing (Coronado, Sos, Talbot, Do & Taylor, 2010). However, there are sex differences that should be taken considered

when engaging in physical activities. According to Johan De Hartog, Boogaard, Nijland & Hoek (2012), young adults are encouraged to be active for 60 minutes of moderate to vigorous activity 5 days a week. According to Miller, Staten, Rayens & Noland (2005) male students are more likely to participate in vigorous activities while females are more likely to workout at moderate intensity.

Men in a fraternity or athletes are more likely to enjoy vigorous activities (Miller, Staten, Rayens & Noland, 2005). This may be due to the competitive nature of males. Competitive students enjoy being challenged and playing sports while less competitive students tend to focus on routine exercises to enhance their body image (Kilpatrick, Herbert & Bartholomew, 2005). Single students had a tendency to exercise more often than those who were in a relationship while females prefer to participate in moderately intense activities such as jogging or yoga (Kilpatrick, Herbert & Bartholomew, 2005). Overall students with good grades enjoyed moderate level workouts compared to those with lower grades. Regardless of gender, participating in any physical activity whether light, moderate, or vigorous is beneficial for all students.

Types of Physical Activity

There are many different ways people are able to implement physical activity into their daily lives. People are able to become more active whether at home, work, or school. By adding a few activities into one's daily life, they are able to improve many aspects of their lives. Students living on campus are able to walk or ride a bike to class to enhance their health while students who commute tend to be less active. Many commuters feel they have less opportunity to be active (Miller, Staten, Rayens & Noland, 2005). However, they are able to enhance their physical activity by parking on the top floor of a parking deck and using the stairs. Miller, Staten, Rayens & Noland (2005) found that people who live on campus tend to do more moderate activity than those who lived off campus; this could be due to the usage of bikes, skateboards, and walking as a means of transportation. They are able to participate in the outdoor and wellness programs, intramurals activities or club sports (Suminski, Petosa, Utter, Zhang, 2002).

Determining the student's motivation is important when trying to influence active lifestyles. When looking at sports versus exercise, student's mindsets are very different. Students who are internally motivated enjoy sports when winning a game is the objective. Intrinsically motivated students enjoy the activity and how it makes them feel, while extrinsically motivated students seek the approval of others. According to Kilpatrick, Herbert & Bartholomew, (2005) research suggests that males are more interested in sports while females prefer exercise. This could be due to media influence and the pressure that is put on females to be thin and perfect as they emerge through adolescence. This negativity could follow them as they enter college.

Many females participate in aerobic activities to improve fitness such as walking, jogging, swimming, stretching, dancing, or yoga, while men enjoy more interactive activities (Get moving... for, 2003). Males also enjoy switching between different exercises, challenging themselves. Playing sports motivates and enhances students to engage in physical activity. People tend to play sports because of their connection with the sport versus the outcome of their body (Kilpatrick, Herbert & Bartholomew, 2005). Being physically active whether aerobic or anaerobic benefits the overall health of the student.

Benefits of Physical Activity for College Students

According to McArthur & Raedeke, approximately 50% of college students do not believe they are partaking in enough physical activity. Thirty-three percent of those surveyed participate in some physical activity and 17% report no exercise in their daily regimen (McArthur & Raedeke, 2009). Students do not partake in physical activities even though the benefits are rewarding and vital to maintain a healthy life. The transitional period of adolescence and adulthood is where many individuals have a weight change (Nelson, Gortmaker, Subramanian, Cheung & Wechsler, 2007).

When looking at college students, physical inactivity is a major health issue. By being inactive, individuals could be shortening their lifespan. Some of the later serious causes of the inactivity are heart disease and mortality (Irwin, 2007). Daily exercise can reduce the probability of having illnesses such as strokes, metabolic syndrome, type 2 diabetes, depression, certain types of cancer, arthritis, and falls (Harms, 2012). These illnesses create burdens on oneself, family, and ultimately the health care system (Nelson, Gortmaker, Subramanian, Cheung & Wechsler, 2007). Individuals can reduce medical interventions and medical costs by maintaining a daily exercise routine. As students begin working out routinely, their bodies will change and begin to develop muscle tone and strength while improving their cardiovascular system (Irwin, 2007).

Some of the medical benefits of exercising are the production of serotonin which enhances one's mood (McGovern, 2005). When student's workout their bodies absorb food, this in turn encourages digestion, which increases one's metabolic rate. This action in the body instantly provides positive effect on one's mood. McGovern stated that physically active people are able to recover quickly from depression or other psychological illnesses. The brain also releases endorphins which minimizes pain and stress. If a student is stressed, they are able to relieve that stress by being active. Physical activity also increases the mental health as individual's age (McGovern, 2005). If a student exercises early in the morning, they are able to improve their mental health and be more alert throughout the day.

In addition to mental health, enhancement of physical appearance is also a benefit of physical activity. According to English (2007), research has shown that both male and female college students state the main reason for exercising is to improve physical appearance. When students are more confident with their looks, their mood is enhanced. This positive and energized feeling one experiences after exercising provides motivation for continuing to participate in the activity (Bragg, Carolyn, Kaye & Desmond, 2009).

Social surroundings may also affect student's willingness to exercise. According to Bragg, Carolyn, Kaye & Desmond (2009), social influence may be seen as a motivator or barrier depending on the student's peers. The results of the study indicated that friends were found to be a key motivator in exercising. They feel as if their friendships strengthen by having an exercising partner. Students are able to be in contact with more friends and enjoy socializing as they workout (Brown, Huber & Bergman, 2006).

Barriers of Physical Activity

The perceived barriers of physical activity vary with every age group, especially among college students. Many students lack the motivation to be active. Leisure physical activities are

not highly looked upon among college students (Brown, Huber & Bergman, 2006). The United States has faced a dramatic increase in obesity with over one third of adults being obese (Bragg, Carolyn, Kaye & Desmond, 2009). Male college students are more likely to be overweight than females (Nelson, Gortmaker, Subramanian, Cheung & Wechsler (2007). It could be the case that male college students who are overweight may feel insecure going into a workout facility and being around their physically fit peers. A workout facility may be a barrier in itself. In a study conducted by Brown (2005), the respondents stated that the exercise facilities were too far away, had irregular operating hours, did not have type of physical activity they wanted to engage, or facilities were not located in safe locations. Institutions that are located in a surrounding metropolis may have a location issue in regards to safety (Bragg, Carolyn, Kaye & Desmond, 2009).

Time constraints can also be barriers to physical activities (Coronado, Sos, Talbot, Do & Taylor, 2010). With coursework and extracurricular activities, students may have limited time in their schedules to workout. The amount of time it takes to work out and prepare for the day may not be appealing. Students who believe they are too busy with their classes, work responsibilities, and social life have a tendency to forego exercising. Social influence can be seen as a barrier or benefit. Students may find their peers to be either a motivator or enabler (Bragg, Carolyn, Kaye & Desmond, 2009). According to Brown (2005), if students do not have a workout partner they are less likely to participate in physical activities. Some students will not exercise if their friends do not do so as well. Although some students may make excuses for their lack of engaging in exercise, campus recreational centers provide possibilities to eliminate these reasons.

Conclusion

Considering the benefits and barriers of physical activity among college students play an important role in how to create a physically active environment (Brown, 2005). Research studies have provided supporting evidence that participating in some type of physical exercise is beneficial. Many universities provide students with health related resources. Recreation centers provide students with basic equipment for cardio and strength training as well as information and programming to promote healthy living. Becoming involved in intramural or club sports is another great way to stay fit and strengthen ones endurance and build self-esteem.

Using the resources that are provided and establishing healthy habits is important during the time in which college students are developing. Working out has been shown to improve moods and helping students feel better physically. It is also a great way to socialize with their peers by doing an activity together. Student's should evaluate their daily lifestyle and incorporate more activity into their days when possible. To improve the activity among college students, recreation and wellness centers should generate creative ideas to better market what they have to offer for students. These centers should focus on getting the attention of the freshmen students to promote healthy living as soon as the student arrives at college. They are able to maintain the student's interest by providing new programs or popular programs more often. Creating intramural sports or providing sports more regularly, they are able to maintain the interest of the students. Students want to feel appreciated and enjoy receiving incentives; creating incentive programs at the beginning of the year could increase activity within the program.

In conclusion, student affairs professionals should encourage students to be physically active and foster and develop healthy lifestyles. Students' first year of college is a very

influential time in their college matriculation, and thus students may be more susceptible to encouragement of maintaining a daily routine of physical activity. For example, housing and residence life staff can have discussions with their residents; during orientation by orientation staff, or have campus recreational staff have an open house event or visit a first year student forum/class. With a combined effort from student affairs professionals, the message of developing and maintaining physically active lifestyles will be heard by students.

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Berkley Henshaw is a second year graduate student, pursuing a M.Ed. in Higher Education Leadership at Valdosta State University (VSU). Berkley serves as a Graduate Assistant for Weight Training and Front Desk Operations in the Campus Recreation Center at VSU. Additionally, she is also a fitness instructor teaching classes in cycling and high intensity interval training. Berkley has a Bachelor of Science degree in Speech Language Pathology from Old Dominion University in Norfolk, Virginia.

James G. Archibald is an Assistant Professor and Program Coordinator for the Higher Education & Student Affairs program at Valdosta State University. Dr. Archibald holds a Doctorate of Philosophy degree in Higher Education Administration and Student Affairs from Ohio University, a Master of Science degree in Guidance and Counseling from Austin Peay State, and a Bachelor of Science degree in Psychology from Morehouse College.

Influence of Alternative Break Program Participation on College Students' Development of Moral Reasoning

By

Danny N. Glassmann, Merrily S. Dunn, and Michelle M. Espino

Abstract

Although an ample amount of research on college students' moral reasoning exists, little has been written about the degree to which participation in community service and alternative break programs results in growth of moral reasoning. This study investigated the extent to which participation in alternative break programs resulted in the development of college students' moral reasoning. Results of pre- and post-Defining Issues Tests showed statistically significant differences between males and females and between White and non-White students. Implications regarding the influence of gender and ethnicity on alternative break programs outcomes and further research are discussed.

Introduction

There are many moral dilemmas that college students face, such as cheating, underage drinking, and hazing. A common expectation of the college experience is that it should help students not only grow cognitively, but also develop effective moral reasoning. To address these expectations, universities have historically articulated a clear focus on the development of citizens who think and act morally (Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005). It is easy to see the importance postsecondary education places on the moral dimension of development with phrases in mission statements such as *preparation of citizens, civic engagement, character development, moral leadership, service-learning, and responsibility to participate in a diverse democracy* (King & Mayhew, 2004).

Universities have attempted to meet their espoused learning outcome of increasing moral reasoning by offering "educational experiences for students to develop their moral capacities" (King & Mayhew, 2004, p. 376). From academic courses that include a focus on critical thinking, ethics, and multiculturalism to co-curricular activities such as study abroad and student government, many institutions of higher education offer opportunities for the development of students' moral reasoning; many of which have increased growth in this area (King & Mayhew, 2004).

Although various researchers have investigated the effects of curricular and co-curricular experiences on college students' moral reasoning, there has been limited research in the area of community service and alternative break programs. Studies that have investigated the influence of community service participation on moral reasoning have found mixed results in the amount of growth that occurs and differences between gender and ethnicity (Boss, 1994; Cram, 1998; Pratt, 2001; Wright, 2001). Further study is needed to assess the effectiveness of community service and alternative break programs on students' moral reasoning.

To fill this gap, this article focuses on a community service-based, Alternative Spring Break (ASB) Program at a research-extensive university in the Southeast. This program was

started in 1994 by students interested in spending a week engaged in community service. Students travel across the East Coast and Southeast to participate in community service projects benefitting a variety of communities and encouraging an understanding of pressing social issues such as poverty, racism, homelessness, healthcare, and the environment.

For this study, the authors focused on the extent to which community service influences moral reasoning. The main research question was: Does participation in an alternative spring break program result in an increase in college students' moral reasoning? Additional questions were: (1) Does gender influence college students' growth in moral reasoning?; (2) Does ethnicity influence college students' growth in moral reasoning?; (3) Does the type of program (children's issues, homelessness, poverty, housing, environmental, HIV/AIDS, cultural, and disability awareness) influence college students' growth in moral reasoning?; and (4) Does self-reported previous community service experience influence college students' growth in moral reasoning? This study offers insights regarding growth in moral reasoning through alternative break programs in an effort to more effectively create, administer, and assess programs that have an emphasis on influencing moral reasoning.

Literature Review

There are several approaches to studying moral reasoning (for a full explanation of these approaches, see Killen and Smetana, 2006), but the most widely known theory of moral development is Kohlberg's (1981, 1984) conceptualization of moral reasoning. Kohlberg's (1976) research and theory of moral development built upon Piaget's (1932/1977) study of the moral reasoning of children and provided the foundation for later work by Gilligan (1982) and Rest, Narvaez, Bebeau, and Thoma (1999, 2000). In Kohlberg's levels of moral development, there are six distinctive stages, of which only the first three share similar features with Piaget's stages. The stages represent a different relationship between the self and society's rules and expectations at each level of development. A person passes through these stages without skipping one or reversing their order, although not everyone progresses through all six stages.

In the Preconventional level (Stages 1 and 2), an individual is self-focused and disregards the rights and concerns of others. Good citizenship is important and others' opinions are a priority in decision-making in the Conventional level (Stages 3 and 4). At this level, "conventions, rules, obligations, and expectations are experienced as being part of the self" (Gielen, 1991, p. 30). In the Postconventional level (Stages 5 and 6), reasoning is based on principles and values that are determined by self instead of others. General principles, such as freedom, equality, and solidarity, guide moral and ethical decision-making during this level.

Although Kohlberg's theory has undergone extensive research by others (Evans, Forney, Guido, Patton, & Renn, 2010; Rest, 1986), his work has not been without criticism, including bias against woman (Gilligan, 1977, 1982), lack of consideration of cultural differences, lack of real-life situations rather than hypothetical dilemmas, and emphasis on rational aspects of reasoning while neglecting emotional factors (Arnold, 2000; Rest et al., 1999). Despite the concerns that Kohlberg's theory of moral development has many potential flaws, it remains as the foundation for subsequent research on moral reasoning (Daeg de Mott, 2001).

As a protégé of Larry Kohlberg's, James Rest evaluated and responded to the criticisms directed towards Kohlberg's theory. His work on the Defining Issues Test (DIT, Rest, 1979) was a departure from the Kohlbergian approach to assessment, known as the Moral Judgment Interview (MJI, Colby, Kohlberg, Biggs, & Lieberman, 1983), and provided a means for

addressing the underlying issues of Kohlberg's approach that were of issue (e.g., simple stage theory and its description of development as step-like and hierarchical) (King & Mayhew, 2004).

Rest's approach not only created a new evaluation tool, but also evolved into its own theory. In this new approach, cognitive schemas rather than stages are used to describe how individuals organize new information and "envision[s] development as shifting distributions rather than as a staircase" (Rest, Narvaez, Bebeau, & Thoma, 2000, p. 384). Schemas were defined as "general knowledge structures residing in long-term memory" that develop as individuals "notice similarities and recurrences in experiences" (p. 389).

In response to how a person interprets and responds to societal obligations, Rest et al. (2000) theorized three structures in moral reasoning: the Personal Interest Schema, the Maintaining Norms Schema, and the Postconventional Schema. Komives and Woodard (2004) summarized the schemas as follows:

The Personal Interest Schema involves analysis of what each individual has to gain or lose. The emphasis in this schema is on the individual and those closest to this person. This schema includes elements of Kohlberg's second and third stages. The Maintaining Norms Schema is characterized by an individual recognizing and abiding by established social norms above all else. Kohlberg's fourth stage most resembles this schema. The Postconventional Schema contains elements of Kohlberg's fifth and sixth stages in which an individual interprets moral obligations in terms of shared ideals. (p. 192)

The available evidence for the impact of the collegiate environment on the moral reasoning of students is based on the findings from these two major instruments, the Moral Judgment Interview (MJI, Colby, Kohlberg, Biggs, & Lieberman, 1983), and the more recent Defining Issues Test (DIT, Rest, 1979, 1986; Rest et al., 1999). Each instrument presents a series of moral dilemmas and attempts to determine the extent to which an individual uses principled moral reasoning in making a judgment or decision about each dilemma.

Community Service and Service-Learning

A review of the literature shows solid evidence that the college experience has a positive influence on the growth of moral reasoning (Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005). Multiple studies have shown that student participation in service-learning programs helps meet community needs; facilitates learning of course content; and enhances students' personal, interpersonal, cognitive, and moral development (Cram, 1998; Eyler, Giles, & Braxton, 1997; Johnson & Bozeman, 1998; Myers-Lipton, 1998; Osborne, Hammerich, & Hensley, 1998; Payne, 2000; Rhodes, 1999). Little research documents a similar impact of community service on moral development.

In one example, Boss (1994) compared two similar sections of the same ethics course; one with and one without a service component. Students in the service-learning section completed 20 hours of community service and kept a journal. The students in the course that included service-learning demonstrated higher levels of moral reasoning than those in the section who did not, even after controlling for class size, instructor, class activities, and texts used across the two sections. As evidenced by this study, the community service component of the class served as the critical factor in facilitating growth in moral reasoning. However, a similar study conducted by Cram (1998) reported that growth in moral reasoning was almost identical between the experimental and control sections.

In two other studies, Wright (2001) and Pratt (2001) found no significant difference in levels of moral reasoning for students who participated in community service and those who did

not. They did find that there were differential effects for participation in community service by gender. Male students' levels of moral reasoning increased dramatically as a result of participating in these experiential learning opportunities, while female students' levels either slightly increased or stayed the same. These gender effects are consistent with results reported for Boss's (1994) and Abdolmohammadi, Gabhart, and Reeve's (1997) samples.

Methods

To understand to what extent participation in an Alternative Spring Break (ASB) Program at a research-extensive university in the Southeast affects moral reasoning of college students, this study employed a quantitative, pre- and post-questionnaire design utilizing the Defining Issues Test (DIT) as the research instrument. The DIT has become the most widely used measure of moral reasoning in studies of college students (King & Mayhew, 2004). The instrument (known as DIT-1) presents a series of moral dilemmas and attempts to determine the extent to which an individual uses moral reasoning in making a judgment about each dilemma. A revised version, referred to as DIT-2, contains updated dilemmas and items, new indices, slightly more powerful validity criteria, and purges fewer subjects for bogus data. The reliability and validity of the DIT has been well established (Davison, 1979; Davison & Robbins, 1978; Rest, Narvaez, Bebeau, & Thoma, 1999). Recognizing the utilization of the DIT in most studies of moral reasoning and its well tested design, the DIT-2 was chosen as the instrument in this study to measure the development of moral reasoning for college students participating in alternative break programs.

To determine the sample for this study, the authors received permission from the office that coordinates the ASB Program to administer the DIT-2 to approximately 275 students who had applied and were selected to participate in the ASB Program in the spring of 2010. The students were randomly separated into 18 groups focused on children's issues, homelessness and poverty, poverty and children, affordable housing and construction, environmental awareness, HIV/AIDS awareness and prevention, cultural exploration, and disability awareness. Of these groups, 15 ASB trips participated in the study. Trips that had no or very few paired DIT-2 pre- and post-tests were taken out of the sample. Participant DIT-2 pre- and post-tests from nine trips were used in the analysis. In addition, matched DIT-2 tests that were rejected for consistency and reliability errors were not used in the analysis of this study.

The DIT-2 pre-test was given to student participants a few days before or on the first day of their trips and the DIT-2 post-test was given to student participants on the last day of their trips. Each trip had a Site Leader who distributed pre-test and post-test information packets to students. Prior to the trips, a meeting took place with the Site Leaders to discuss the study and their responsibilities. The pre-test packets included an information sheet about the study, demographic sheet, and DIT-2 tests. The post-test packets included an information sheet about the study and DIT-2 tests. The incentive for the students to complete the DIT-2 pre- and post-tests was a drawing of two trip waivers valued at \$140 dollars each.

Sample

Of the 142 students who participated in the nine trips used in this sample, 80 completed both the DIT pre- and post-tests for a response rate of 56%. The demographic information for the sample is summarized in Table 1. In the sample, a larger percentage of participants were

female (86.3%). The mean age of participants was 19.98 and ranged from 18 to 28. White (40%) was the highest self-reported ethnicity followed by Asian (31.3%), Black (12.5%), Bi-racial (6.3%), Hispanic (3.8%), no answer (3.8), and other (2.5%). A majority of students self-reported their academic class standing to be junior (35%), sophomore (28.8%), or freshmen (22.5%), with smaller percentages classifying themselves as seniors (12.5%) or other (1.3%).

Analysis

In order to answer the research questions of this study, multiple quantitative methods were utilized to determine correlations, differences, and significance. Pearson product moment correlation analysis was used to study the relationships between the DIT-2 pre- and post-tests and demographic information. Independent and paired samples t-tests were employed to measure differences between scores and demographic variables. Repeated-measures ANOVAs were conducted to analyze differences between means and test for significance.

Results

The main research question of this study focused on whether participation in an Alternative Spring Break (ASB) Program would result in growth of college students' moral reasoning. As Table 2 shows, the DIT-2 pre- and post-test results were found to be positively correlated ($r=.683$; $p<.01$). Comparison of the means indicated a slight increase in scores from DIT-2 pre-test ($M=39.64$, $SD=15.16$) to DIT-2 post-test ($M=40$, $SD=16.34$) with a mean difference of 1.65 points (Table 3). However, a paired samples t-test of DIT-2 pre- and post-test scores did not show any statistical significance for the different schema scores (Table 4). The normative mean for college students ranged from 32.32 for freshmen to 37.84 for seniors (Bebeau & Thoma, 2003).

From the main research question, four supporting research questions were asked in this study. The first of the supporting research questions was whether gender influences college students' growth of moral reasoning. The results of a repeated measures ANOVA (Table 5) showed that there was no significant effect of gender on growth of moral reasoning as measured by the DIT-2 pre- and post-test scores, $F_{(1,78)} = 2.106$, $p=.151$. There was also no correlation between DIT-2 pre-test and gender ($r=-.008$; $p<.05$), although there was a correlation between DIT-2 post-test and gender ($r=.294$; $p<.01$) (Table 2). As shown in Table 6, comparison of the means showed almost no difference between males ($M=39.93$, $SD=13.66$) and females ($M=39.59$, $SD=15.48$) in the DIT-2 pre-test scores, but there was a noticeable decrease for males ($M=28.04$, $SD=11.53$) and a slight increase for females ($M=41.91$, $SD=16.25$) in the DIT-2 post-test scores (Figure 1). Placing the results in a larger context, the normative mean for male college students ranges from 29.66 for freshmen to 34.58 for seniors, whereas female college students ranged from 34.02 for freshmen to 40.03 for seniors (Bebeau & Thoma, 2003).

In terms of determining whether ethnicity was an influence on college students' growth of moral reasoning, the ethnicity categories were collapsed into White and non-White groups because of the small number of different ethnic group individuals represented in the study. Thirty-two or 41.5% were in the White group and 45 or 58.5% were in the non-White group. We found that ethnicity and DIT test scores were moderately correlated for both the DIT-2 pre-test ($r=-.426$; $p<.01$) and post-test ($r=-.415$; $p<.01$) (Table 2). The repeated measures ANOVA results shown in Table 5 demonstrate that there was a significant effect of ethnicity on growth of

moral reasoning as measured by the DIT-2 pre- and post-test scores, $F_{(1,75)} = 19.743$, $p < .001$. The results indicate that the White students ($M = 47.883$, 95% CI [43.249, 52.516]) scored significantly higher on the DIT-2 tests than non-White students ($M = 34.264$, 95% CI [30.457, 38.271]). Bebeau and Thoma (2003) do not provide any normative data based on ethnicity to compare with the results, but it is important to note that the means for both White and non-White increased slightly, although not at a level that was statistically significant (Table 6).

The final supporting research questions asked whether the type of program or self-reported previous community service experience influenced college students' growth of moral reasoning. Although there was a positive correlation found between community service experience and gender ($r = .255$; $p < .05$) as shown in Table 2, no statistically significant differences were found between community service experience, $F(1,72) = 1.507$, $p = .224$, location of trips, $F(8,71) = 1.532$, $p = .162$, or type of service, $F(5,74) = .375$, $p = .865$.

Discussion

Similar to findings by Wright (2001) and Pratt (2001), this study found that there is no overall difference between DIT-2 pre- and post-test scores of participants in the Alternative Spring Break (ASB) Program. This study did, however, find different results than Wright (2001), Pratt (2001), Boss (1994), and Abdolmohammadi, Gabhart, and Reeves (1997) with regard to the effect of community service on male participants. Those studies found that P-scores for males increased dramatically as a result of participating in experiential learning opportunities, while P-scores for females either slightly increased or stayed the same. In this study, males and females were found to have relatively similar scores on the DIT before they participated in the program and strikingly different scores after the program. Consistent with prior studies, females' scores increased slightly after the program. However, males' scores decreased drastically after the program. This finding should be kept in context of the very small sample size ($n = 11$) for males in this study, which may have skewed the results.

This study also found different results than Gongre (1981) and Locke and Tucker (1988) who found no difference between DIT scores and ethnicity. In this study, White students were found to have higher DIT scores than non-White students. Both ethnic groups did show a slight increase in their DIT pre- and post-test scores, although this change was not found to be statistically significant for either group. Like the previous finding for gender, this finding should also be considered within the limited sample size of these groups. In addition, little research has been conducted to explore whether moral reasoning differs by race or ethnicity (Gongre, 1981; Johnson, Insley, Motwani, & Zbib, 1993; Locke & Tucker, 1988; Loviscky, 2000; Murk & Addleman, 1992) and this finding may suggest that further research needs to occur to determine if the DIT is biased for different ethnicity groups.

Limitations

The generalizability of this study is limited because it was only conducted on one university campus and with one alternative break program. In addition, the small sample size of 9 of the 18 ASB Programs used in this study is also another limitation. The overrepresentation of White and female participants is important to note. To account for this, we collapsed the non-White groups into one group for better comparison. The duration of this study may have limited the study, as well. The timing of the DIT pre- and post-tests could have been too soon before or

after to adequately capture the program's influence on students' moral reasoning. Lastly, it may have been useful to ask participants whether or not they had previous community service experience in a similar setting as the service trip they were assigned, instead of asking whether they had community service experience in general. Previous community service experience in a similar setting may make a difference in the amount of growth in students' moral reasoning.

Implications for Research and Practice

This study is useful in adding to the relatively sparse research on the influence of community service on moral reasoning, especially with regard to gender and ethnicity. Consistent with past research (Pratt, 2001; Wright, 2001), the lack of a statistically significant difference between participants' DIT pre- and post-tests is noteworthy because it shows that programs such as Alternative Spring Break (ASB) do not necessarily influence students' moral reasoning. This study did not investigate the length of time of community service trips and further studies should be conducted to test if longer community service experiences have a greater influence on moral reasoning. In addition, the indication from the data that the influence of community service on moral reasoning differs between ethnic groups and males and females is an important outcome that differs from past research (Gongre, 1981; Locke & Tucker, 1988). Future research should look further at reasons why females and White students participate more than males and other individual ethnic groups and why different ethnic groups and genders may be influenced differently by community service. Another consideration is including student interviews to determine any qualitative factors that may account for an increase or decline in student DIT pre- and post-test scores.

In light of the finding of this study and others (Pratt, 2001; Wright, 2001), there does not seem to be a significant growth in moral reasoning for students who participate in community service programs. As a result, faculty and staff must examine the purpose and intended outcomes for these types of experiences. Perhaps other benefits of community service, such as enhanced awareness and understanding of social issues or increased civic engagement, are being more effectively met than the influence of these experiences on moral reasoning. Student affairs staff and faculty should also take into account the various experiences students may have from different backgrounds, including ethnicity and gender, when designing and recruiting for community service programs. The low number of certain ethnic groups and males who participated in the ASB Program calls for better recruitment efforts directed at these populations to participate in community service. Despite the small number of males in this sample and in light of the decrease in moral reasoning scores for these males, a tentative recommendation may be for greater attention paid to the experiences of males who participate in community service programs. Only through continued research and assessment of community service programs can we understand better their true impact on student development.

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Table 1 *Demographic Characteristics of Participants*

| Variable | N | % |
|---------------------------------------|----|------|
| Gender | | |
| Male | 11 | 13.8 |
| Female | 69 | 86.3 |
| Age | | |
| 18 | 9 | 11.3 |
| 19 | 20 | 25 |
| 20 | 30 | 37.5 |
| 21 | 12 | 15 |
| 22 | 7 | 8.8 |
| 23 | 1 | 1.3 |
| 28 | 1 | 1.3 |
| Ethnicity | | |
| Black or African American | 10 | 12.5 |
| Hispanic, Latino, or Mexican-American | 3 | 3.8 |
| Asian American or Pacific Islander | 25 | 31.3 |
| White or Caucasian | 32 | 40 |
| Bi-racial or Multiracial | 5 | 6.3 |
| Other | 2 | 2.5 |
| No Answer | 3 | 3.8 |
| Academic Class Standing | | |
| Freshman | 18 | 22.5 |
| Sophomore | 23 | 28.8 |
| Junior | 28 | 35 |
| Senior | 10 | 12.5 |
| Other | 1 | 1.3 |

Table 2 *Pearson Correlations of Study Variables*

| Variable | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|----------------------------|---------|---------|-------|-------|-------|
| 1. Pre-DIT Test (P-Score) | ... | | | | |
| 2. Post-DIT Test (P-Score) | .683** | | | | |
| 3. Gender ^a | -.008 | .294** | | | |
| 4. Racial/Cultural | -.426** | -.415** | -.091 | | |
| 5. Community Service | .099 | -.018 | .255* | .019 | |
| 6. Trip | -.093 | -.053 | -.074 | -.046 | -.078 |

^a1=Male; 2=Female; *p<.05. **p<.01.

Table 3 *DIT2 Pre-Post Tests Means and Standard Deviations for Schema Scores and N2 Score*

| Schema Scores | Pre-Test | | Post-Test | |
|-------------------|----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| | Mean | Std. Dev. | Mean | Std. Dev. |
| Personal Interest | 25.83 | 11.59 | 24.63 | 13.22 |
| Maintain Norms | 28.63 | 12.04 | 29.43 | 11.94 |
| Post Conventional | 39.64 | 15.16 | 40.00 | 16.34 |
| N2Score | 37.83 | 14.98 | 39.60 | 16.09 |

Table 4 *Paired Samples T-tests of DIT2 Pre-Post Tests Schema Scores and N2 Score*

| Variable | Mean | Std. Dev. | t-test | df | p |
|-------------------|-------|-----------|--------|----|------|
| Personal Interest | 1.193 | 11.51 | .927 | 79 | .357 |
| Maintain Norms | -.803 | 12.20 | -.589 | 79 | .558 |
| Post Conventional | -.365 | 12.59 | -.259 | 79 | .796 |
| N2Score | -1.77 | 11.53 | -1.37 | 79 | .173 |

*p<.05

Table 5 *Repeated Measures ANOVA for Gender, Ethnicity, Location and Type of Service, and Community Service*

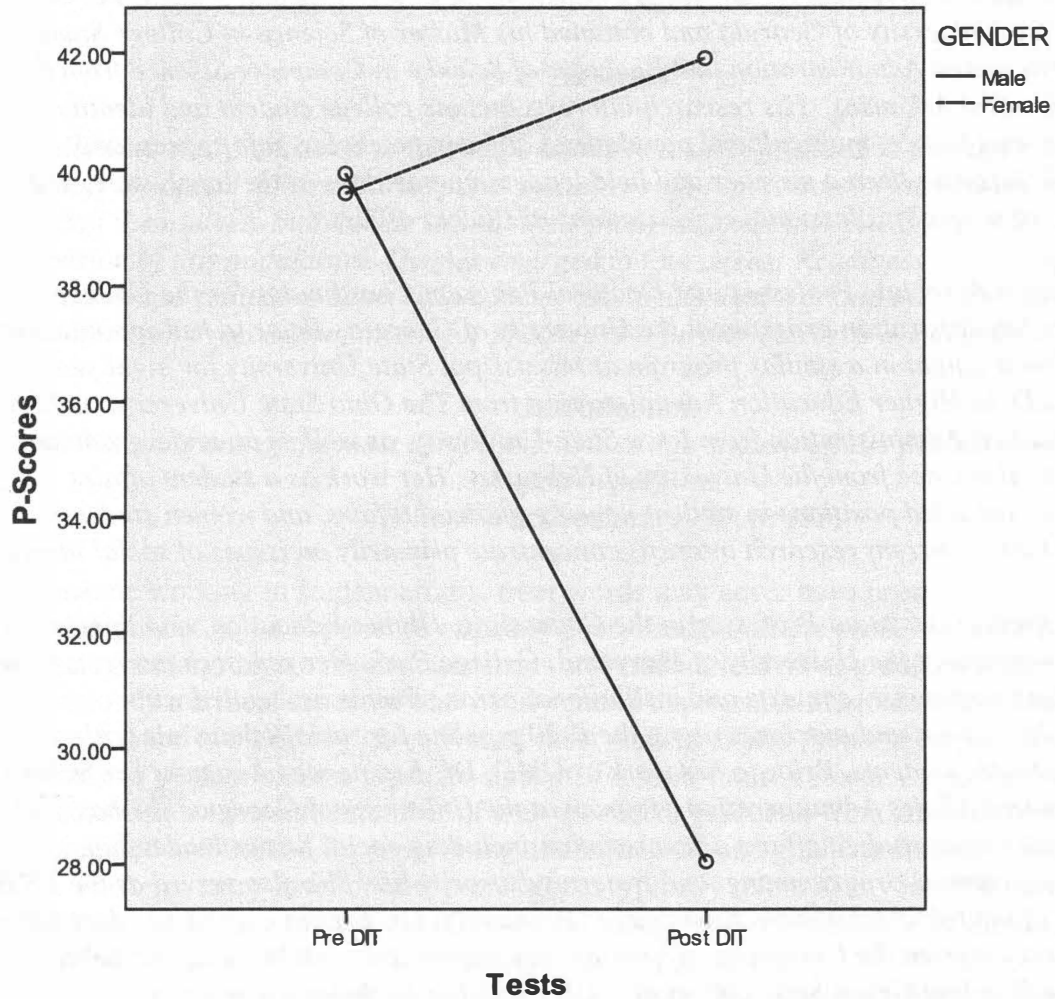
| Variable | df | F | p |
|--------------------------|----|--------|--------|
| Gender (n=80) | 1 | 2.106 | .151 |
| Ethnicity (n=77) | 1 | 19.743 | .000** |
| Location (n=80) | 8 | .900 | .521 |
| Type of Service (n=80) | 5 | .375 | .865 |
| Community Service (n=74) | 1 | .123 | .727 |

**p<.01

Table 6 *DIT-2 Pre-Post Tests Means and Standard Deviations for Gender and Ethnicity*

| Schema Scores | n | Pre-Test | | Post-Test | |
|---------------|----|----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| | | Mean | Std. Dev. | Mean | Std. Dev. |
| Gender | | | | | |
| Male | 11 | 39.93 | 13.66 | 28.04 | 11.53 |
| Female | 69 | 39.59 | 15.48 | 41.91 | 16.25 |
| Ethnicity | | | | | |
| White | 32 | 47.32 | 14.04 | 48.43 | 14.303 |
| Non-White | 45 | 34.13 | 13.97 | 34.58 | 15.75 |

Figure 1. DIT-2 P-scores Means for Pre- and Post-Tests by Gender.



Danny N. Glassmann is the Assistant Dean of Students at Oglethorpe University in Atlanta, Georgia. His professional background includes experience in the areas of residence life, student conduct, Greek life, multicultural affairs, and lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) life. Dr. Glassmann received his Doctorate of Philosophy in Counseling and Student Personnel Services from the University of Georgia and obtained his Master of Science in College Student Personnel Services and Administration and Bachelor of Science in Computer Science from the University of Central Arkansas. His research interests include college student and identity development, social justice, multicultural populations and competencies, safe spaces, and technology. He has also been a member and held leadership positions at the local, state, and national levels of several professional organizations in student affairs.

Merrily S. Dunn is Associate Professor and Doctoral Program Coordinator for the College Student Affairs Administration program at the University of Georgia. Prior to her appointment at UGA, Dr. Dunn taught in a similar program at Mississippi State University for eight years. She holds a Ph.D. in Higher Education Administration from The Ohio State University, an M.S. in Higher Education Administration from Iowa State University, as well as an undergraduate degree in political science from the University of Nebraska. Her work as a student affairs professional has included positions in student housing, judicial affairs, and women student services. Dr. Dunn's current research interests concentrate primarily on issues of social identity.

Michelle M. Espino is Assistant Professor in the Counseling, Higher Education, and Special Education department at the University of Maryland, College Park. Her research interests focus on understanding community contexts and institutional arrangements associated with educational achievement and outcomes along the P-20 pipeline for racial/ethnic minorities, particularly Latina/o students. Prior to her work at UMD, Dr. Espino was Assistant Professor in the College Student Affairs Administration program at the University of Georgia. She has held several positions within student affairs administration including social justice leadership, service-learning, campus programming, and fraternity/sorority life. She also served as the 2008-2010 co-chair of the NASPA Latina/o Knowledge Community. Dr. Espino earned her doctorate in Higher Education from the University of Arizona, her master's degree in College Student Personnel from Bowling Green State University (OH), and her bachelor's degree in International Relations from St. Mary's University (TX).

Skills and Perceptions of Entry-Level Staff Supervision

By

Daniel W. Calhoun and Roger Mitch Nasser, Jr.

Abstract

The following study consisted of 532 respondents to a survey related to the supervision of entry-level staff in student affairs. Participants included both supervisors of entry-level staff and entry-level staff themselves. Individuals shared their thoughts and experiences regarding the supervision of this population. Themes emerged in four areas: Readiness for the supervisory role, challenges related to supervision, supervisor skills, and working through transition. Implications and recommendations for practice and further research are discussed.

Introduction

Supervision is one of the most complex activities that student affairs professionals are called upon to perform

(Winston & Creamer, 1997, p. 187)

To someone working in student affairs, truer words may never have been spoken. Supervision is a key component in the experience of nearly every student affairs professional. Whether overseeing undergraduate resident assistants and student leaders or graduate students, supervision is a critical aspect of one's early career experience. Magolda and Carnaghi (2004) indicate that the two primary objectives of most student affairs preparation programs are to socialize and professionalize graduate students for their future careers. As such, most entry-level staff members, a substantial number of who are recent graduates from advanced programs, are well-prepared and trained for supervising undergraduate and graduate students (Renn & Hodges, 2007). The term entry-level or new professional typically refers to anyone with five years or less of full-time experience in the field (Cilente, Henning, Jackson, Kennedy, & Sloane, 2006; Coleman & Johnson, 1990). This group represents approximately 15% to 20% of the personnel in the higher education workforce (Cilente et al., 2006). The study of college student development helps young supervisors understand the motivations and thought processes of their supervisees. Those who supervise graduate students and new professionals often push for reflection upon the supervisory experience. However, once an individual moves into midlevel and senior level positions, intentional training, mentorship, and opportunities for reflection are rarely implemented. In most mid-level to senior-level positions, despite being an expectation of the job, supervision of staff garners little attention. Wood, Winston, and Polkosnik (1985) indicated that most mid and upper level supervisors have received little if any formal training in the area of supervision and management.

Perhaps it is assumed that supervision is an intuitive process or a rite of passage, and once an individual reaches the mid to upper levels of the profession that they "just know" how to supervise. Unfortunately, the assumptions of skills needed and used by both supervisor and supervisee can cause challenges in the supervisory relationship. Harned and Murphy (1998) explain that:

A common dynamic is that a . . . professional is promoted into a managerial position with little or no true preparation, where the fallback to avoid failure is not better supervision [of subordinates] but harder work. This can create an unhealthy situation that may result in resentment and disenchantment by both overwrought supervisors and neglected staff (p. 45).

Often times, assumptions about the skills needed and used by both supervisor and supervisee can cause challenges to the supervisory relationship. For a field that prides itself on training and preparation, student affairs professionals must more fully address the needs for supervision of full time professionals.

The purpose of this study was to explore the experiences and perceptions surrounding the supervision of entry-level staff in student affairs. Data collection focused on the supervisory relationship, training and preparation, and support from both those that supervise entry-level staff, and the staff members themselves. By further exploring the skills and perceptions of entry-level staff supervision, our hope was to identify ways to bridge the gap between supervisor and supervisee and uncover methods to better support and prepare supervisors of entry-level staff.

Review of Literature

In order to fully explore the supervision of new professionals, it is important to look at the manner in which supervisors are prepared, what supervision models are utilized within student affairs, and the type of relationships that exist between supervisor and supervisee.

Supervision Training

Preparation for supervising staff should be a critical component of staff training. Garland and Grace (1993) argued that “employers of new student affairs professionals must recognize a responsibility to provide new staff with ongoing training and support to build expertise, develop professionalism, and provide opportunities to evaluate and improve performance” (p. 96). However, most student affairs staff training programs tend to focus on the preparation of individuals for a specific position, rather than the broader development of professional skills and competencies, such as those outlined by the American College Personnel Association (ACPA) and the National Association of Student Personnel Administrators (NASPA) (ACPA, 2007). While many new professionals may develop the skills necessary for staff supervision through routine practice of their first position, much of this skill development is implicit and not openly discussed. Moreover, these skills are often focused upon the supervision of undergraduate or graduate students, and not full time professionals. Finally, while some employers provide ongoing professional development opportunities for new professionals, there exists no standard curriculum for preparing professionals to take on the supervision of other professional staff members.

In fact, it is clear that graduate preparation programs are instrumental in equipping many new professionals with appropriate skills for future experiences in student affairs, but that training will only go so far. For instance, some graduate preparation programs focus on ethical issues faced in transitioning to life as a new professional or supervising undergraduate student staff (Renn & Hodges, 2007), few programs dedicate time discussing the issues that happen beyond the entry-level stage and more specifically on matters surrounding the supervision of full

time professional staff. Once students make the transition to practitioners, the type of supervision they receive can impact their professional experience and warrants further examination.

Supervision in Student Affairs

The importance of good supervision on the development of professionals is well documented (Dalton, 1996; Ricci, Potterfield, & Piper, 1987; Saunders, Cooper, Winston, & Chernow, 2000; Upcraft, 1982). Several techniques have been recommended for supervision within the student affairs field, including a developmental model rooted in psychology proposed by Stock-Ward and Javorek (2003), and the concept of synergistic supervision, first introduced by Winston and Creamer (1997).

Synergistic supervision has been touted as an effective model for supervision because it benefits both the individuals (supervisor/supervisee) and the institution, enhancing organizational effectiveness (Saunders, et al., 2000). If both the supervisor and supervisee can work together to realize each other's goals and maximize leadership growth, both the individuals and the organization will thrive (Winston & Creamer, 1997). This is consistent with the key components of synergistic supervision, which include mutual buy-in, two-way communication, and a focus on competence and goals by both parties (Winston & Creamer, 1998).

In addition, synergistic supervision, and more specifically and the relationship between supervisor and supervisee, has been viewed as a means of retention for student affairs professionals (Tull, 2007). Shupp and Armino (2012) also evaluated the needs of entry-level staff in regards to synergistic supervision and recommended a number of ways that supervisors can better support supervisees. Some of the recommendations included: focusing on reflection, professional development, empowerment, communication, and the relational aspects of supervision. The literature supports the idea that synergistic supervision is an effective method to use within student affairs, primarily because of its focus on relationships. Supervision, at its core, is based upon the relationship between the supervisor and the supervisee.

Supervisor/Supervisee Relationship

Developing strong relationships is a focal point for student affairs practitioners, so it stands to reason that the relationship supervisor and supervisee would be a key factor in the development of new professionals. Recent research has examined the transition process for new professionals (Amey & Reesor, 2002; Cilente, et al., 2006; Janosik, Creamer, Hirt, Winston, Jr., Saunders, & Cooper, 2003; Magolda & Carnaghi, 2004; Renn & Hodges, 2007; Renn & Jessup-Anger, 2008), the desired traits for new professionals (Belch & Mueller, 2003), expectations of supervisors, expectations of graduate students entering professional practice, and how to prepare new professionals for practice (Jones & McEwen, 2006).

At the entry-level stage of a professional's development, it is crucial that they have the support and tutelage of mentors and supervisors. Cilente et al. (2006) suggested it is the responsibility of supervisors of new professionals to "help them adapt to an inherently different culture than what they may be used to" (p. 18). These individuals may not be equipped with the knowledge and skills necessary to excel and need someone to provide guidance and direction. Ignelzi (1998) also found that "the supervision that developing professionals receive is important for learning and mastering the craft of their profession" (p. 2).

New professionals believe they are self-aware and open to change, are knowledgeable of institutional culture and politics, and recognize the value of professional networks. In addition, they feel that they understand the importance of good supervision, strive to find balance between theory and practice, and hope to establish a professional identity early (Amey & Ressor, 2002; Cilente, et al., 2006; Magolda & Carnighi, 2004; Renn & Hodges, 2007). Ignelzi and Whitely (2004) contend that the ways in which the supervisee interprets and makes meaning of his or her work directly impacts the concept of supervision. New professionals value mentorship and are constantly looking for guidance and support (Cilente et al., 2006; Janosik et al., 2003; Tull, 2006). Yet, if there is a discrepancy between what supervisors and supervisees feel are important, the supervisory relationship may be damaged.

The literature demonstrates that the supervision of entry-level staff is an area that clearly warrants additional investigation. Further exploring the perceptions of entry-level staff supervision may help to identify ways to bridge the gap between supervisor and supervisee. Examining how each side views the supervision experience might help uncover ways to better support and prepare supervisors of entry-level staff. The researchers sought to identify the perceptions of supervision by soliciting feedback from those experiencing it first-hand, so surveying both entry-level student affairs staff and their supervisors seemed justified.

Methodology

As Fowler (2002) stated, using open-ended responses allows researchers to better access the respondents' true feelings on an issue. This method allows for answers that may be not be anticipated by researchers and is less biased than other approaches because it limits researchers from providing suggested responses.

In an effort to afford participants the opportunity to answer questions in their own words, the researchers constructed a survey primarily using open-ended responses. Sturgeon and Winter (1999), and Willke, Adams, and Girnius (1999) found that answers to open-ended questions in email and internet surveys were much richer than in other survey modes, so an online delivery system was used.

Data Collection

For this study, the researchers used the selection process known as purposive sampling (Patton, 1990). Participants were recruited electronically through emails and list-servs, primarily those associated with ACPA, NASPA, and professional organizations related to those two entities. Data was collected using a short-survey developed through Survey Monkey, which was distributed via email to colleagues and list-servs over a two-week period. Results were narrowed to surveys completed by entry-level student affairs professionals or those that supervise entry-level professionals.

Sample Characteristics

A total of 532 participants who met the necessary criteria completed the survey. Among the respondents, 36.2% (n=184) were male, 62.6% (n=323) identified as female, with 0.2% (n=1) identified as transgender. With regards to institution type, 59.1% (n= 300) were employed at a

public 4-year institution, 36.2% (n=184) worked at a private 4-year institution, 3.9% (n=20) were employed at a public 2-year institution, and 0.8% (n= 4) worked at a private 2-year institution. In addition, participants were asked to identify the functional area (unit within Student Affairs) in which they worked. The top five areas represented were Residence Life with 39% of respondents (N=198), Student Activities at 12.4% (n=63), Student Affairs Administration at 9.1% (n=46), Academic Advising at 7.9% (n=40), and Career Services at 6.3% (n=32).

A key difference in the data was the experience level of participants. 5.7% (n=29) of respondents identified as full time professionals without a master's degree, 13.4% (n=68) were graduate students, 33.7% (n=171) had 1-3 years experience post masters, 16.5% (n=84) had 4-6 years experience post masters, 9.5% (n=48) had 7-10 years post masters experience, and 21.3% (n=108) 10 or more years post masters experience.

Instrument

The survey instrument included questions for both those who supervised entry-level staff, and entry-level staff themselves. After supplying basic demographic information and acknowledging informed consent, respondents were asked to identify their supervisory role/experience. Participants responded to question items that focused on their perceptions and experiences related to supervision (either as a supervisor or supervisee). Using open-ended response questions allowed participants to further expand upon their thoughts, adding detail and providing an opportunity to reflect upon their supervision experiences. Survey questions differed slightly in wording based upon whether or not the participant indicated they were a supervisor or supervisee.

Participants identified as entry-level staff supervisory experience included: 40.4% (n=205) supervised primarily undergraduate student staff, 16.3% (n=83) did not currently supervise any staff, and 8.7% (n=44) supervised graduate students. 4.9% (n=29) supervised bachelor level professionals, and 29.7% (n=151) supervised master's level professionals.

Data Analysis

Data was analyzed using a mix of methods. Descriptive statistics were used to analyze the closed items and an inductive analytical approach was applied to analyze the open-ended responses (Thomas, 2006). The purpose for using the inductive approach was to condense the raw text data into a brief summary format, establish clear links between the research objectives and the summary findings and develop a theory about the underlying structure of experiences. This approach is evident in several types of qualitative data analyses (Miles & Huberman, 1994; Creswell, 2005; Strauss & Corbin, 1990; Pope, Ziebland, & Mays, 2000).

Additionally, to maintain the trustworthiness of the data across and in-between the open-ended questions, a strict protocol for analysis and interpretation was followed (Creswell, 2005). Open-ended responses were reviewed by both researchers to identify themes. A measure of analytic trustworthiness derived from our separate analyses of the responses and initial open coding. We then compared codes and themes for congruence and dissonance, exploring each for underlying biases.

We also developed categories that could increase our understanding of the experiences of entry-level staff. The transcripts were coded in a hierarchal fashion, beginning with open coding, and then moving into axial and selective coding to develop themes in four areas. These

included: readiness for supervisory role, challenges related to supervision, supervisor skills, and working through transition. These themes were further subdivided as shown in Figure 1:

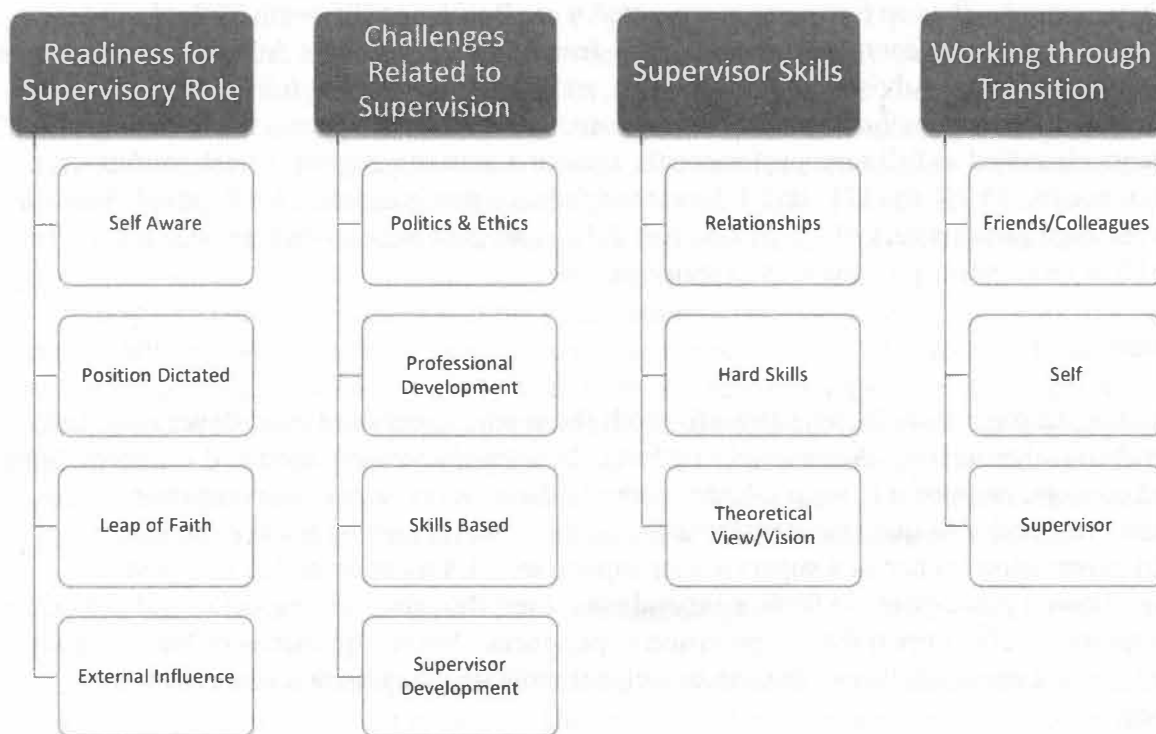


Figure 1: Thematic Framework for Study

Findings

Our findings revealed four distinct themes and smaller subsets within those themes. These themes and the subsets within those themes are explained and discussed in this section.

Readiness for Supervisory Role

When participants were asked how they knew they were ready to supervise new professionals, four themes emerged: self-awareness (54%; n=287), position dictated (23%; n=123), leap of faith (16%; n= 85), and externally driven awareness (7%; n=37).

Self-awareness. Participants whose responses reflected a sense of self-awareness actively pursued a supervisory experience and prepared through reflection and the realization that they were ready for the challenge. One participant stated, "It was mostly an intuitive sense coupled with believing I was an expert in Student Affairs and a strong leader who could motivate, inspire, and manage the performance of others." Another respondent said, "I think there comes a point when you know you've done all you can do supervising students and mentoring coworkers..."

Position dictated. Other participants became supervisors simply because supervision was part of the current job position. These individuals may or may not have had any formal training or preparation to become supervisors. These thoughts were captured in the following statements: “I didn’t necessarily [know I was ready]. It came with the job – as I was promoted I gained supervision duties. I didn’t necessary learn the theory and research until my Ph.D. training.” This individual assumed the supervisory role via promotion, but wasn’t formally prepared until later, during post-master’s work. Similarly, another participant stated that “I didn’t [know I was ready]. I got promoted (and as a result I was a mediocre supervisor for several years).” This person took the supervisor job, but recognized after the fact that a lack of training and preparation likely led to poor supervision.

Leap of faith. A third group was comprised of those who may not have felt ready for a supervisory role, but decided to take a chance anyway. Responses from this group included statements such as “I’m not sure I did know [I was ready]. I thought I was ready because I had been an RD for six years and had been watching and learning from supervisors for a while.” Another participant described it as follows:

I don’t know if you really know that you’re ready to supervise. I think it is something that you find out while doing it. Naturally we all have skills or strengths that might make us a better supervisor than one of our colleagues, but with time everyone fine-tunes their tools.

For the individuals in this group, even though they may not have felt fully prepared, having a core set of transferable skills and several years of work experience was enough for them to give supervision a try.

External influence. A small percentage of participants indicated that they were convinced by a colleague to take on a supervisory role. These respondents needed that push to realize their potential, as demonstrated by this response: “I honestly didn’t realize it... someone else did. I doubted myself until I was in the role doing it.” Another response was “having the support and encouragement from my supervisor to take on new professionals was how I knew I was ready.” For these individuals, it took someone who had a familiarity with their skills and potential to provide them with the confidence to take on the supervisory challenge.

Overall, the results indicated that the majority of professionals decided to move to a position of advanced supervision because they felt they were ready. However, it is possible these new supervisors may have overestimated their own abilities, knowledge base, and understanding of staff needs. Both the supervisor or the supervisee may experience some challenges in their new positions. These experiences will be further discussed in the next section.

Challenges Related to Supervision of New Professionals

A number of comments emerged related to the challenges associated with supervising new professionals. Participants provided responses related to both employee preparedness and supervisor development.

Employee Preparedness. Topics related to professional image, political awareness, and an understanding of the ethics were recurring theme in the data. Nearly 44% (n = 234) believed that new professionals needed a better understanding of campus politics and/or ethics, while 24% (n= 128) touched on topics related to professional development such as soft skills (e.g. communication, self-confidence) and 19% (n=100) mentioned hard skills, for example, learning processes and procedures unique to each institution. Supervisors stated that their staff needed a better understanding of how they should act and react in their first professional position. Several expressed that entry-level staff seemed to lack a full understanding of their role within the organization as illustrated in this statement:

They think they know everything and typically have to learn by making mistakes rather than through guidance from others. They focus on what's best for them rather than what's best for the department/institution first, and they can't understand why that's a problem. They believe they are entitled to a lot, whether that's decision-making authority or live-in quality of life perks. They love to give supervisors and higher-level administrators "feedback" constantly. They are extremely worried about what is fair.

Other challenges relate more to self-confidence and professional ability, as described by this participant:

Helping new professionals to develop their professional identity as well as manage their expectations of self and others. New professionals often come into the position feeling that they have to prove themselves, which causes them to question their competence. Helping new professionals balance this with the work they do can be challenging.

It appears that many new staff either have too much or not enough confidence in their knowledge of the profession and their understanding of their role within it.

Supervisor Development. A number of supervisors reflected on what they could do developmentally with their staff members to alleviate challenges. These respondents (13%; n=70) placed the responsibility to minimize challenges in supervising entry-level staff on themselves as supervisors. They stated that it was up to them to adjust to their supervision styles to the developmental needs of each person, and to avoid making assumptions on what supervisees knew or did not know. This mentality is illustrated in the following response, "Supervision is not taught, I had to get books on supervising new professionals to ensure I was educated for this role. This is something I think graduate preparation programs need to educate on."

The data suggest most supervisors believe new professionals are not prepared for the political and ethical challenges present in entry-level positions. These supervisors may elect a more professional approach with their supervisees in order to educate them on these challenges.

Supervision Skills

In response to the question, "What makes a good supervisor?" three qualities emerged from the data: possessing the ability to create and develop strong relationships (59%; n=314),

having an understanding of required skills and knowledge (29% n=154), and being visionary - embracing a broader theoretical understanding of the field (12%; n=64).

Relational Supervision. Respondents were clear that a personal and caring relationship between supervisor and supervisee was of the utmost importance, as described here:

A supervisor needs to listen to employees, develop a mutual respect with them, care about the people they supervise and recognize when to be firm but also when grace is needed. A supervisor should respond to issues in a timely manner and encourage growth of all their employees.

Those who responded in this manner made it evident that a personal touch was something that entry-level staff highly value. They want to feel respected and that what they do matters to the supervisor.

Administrative Skills and Knowledge. In addition to strong relationships, hard skills such as those in the area of administration were deemed an important characteristic of a good supervisor. These skills are captured in this respondent's list, "organization, good communication skills, humor, concise in giving out information, detail oriented, good writing skills, someone who self-reflect, someone who sets deadlines."

Visionary. Finally, a theoretical approach that was more strategic and visionary was valued. Respondents stated that they wanted a supervisor who demonstrated broader leadership qualities and who could see the whole picture. When asked about what characteristics made a good leader, one respondent stated, "The primary ones to me are: balance of challenge and support, critical thinking, authentic leadership, ability to embrace change, and effective understanding of how to translate developmental theory to practice." For this individual, and those who had similar responses, the character and make-up of the supervisor was very important. To them, preferred supervisor skills include a blend of solid administrative knowledge, the vision to make connections between the abstract and the concrete, and the ability to provide guidance and support through strong relationships.

If most new professionals seek strong developmental relationships with supervisors, we can assume they may believe these relationships will be positive. New professionals may not connect criticism to a positive professional relationship. They may also feel disconnected from supervisors in terms of perceived understanding of the position and profession as a whole.

Working Through Transitional Issues

Recent literature has discussed the sudden and abrupt challenges new professionals face when transitioning into their first position (Renn & Jessup-Anger, 2008), what we referred to in our survey as a sense of shock. Of all the respondents, 38% (n= 172) stated during their time as an entry-level professional that they felt some sort of shock. Participants were asked to comment on how they worked through this shock in their transition.

Self-Reliance. Of those that indicated they felt shock, the majority of respondents 57% (n=98) revealed that they relied on themselves to address the shock, either by staying the course,

switching positions, or using spirituality and reflection. Not all respondents could handle the shock on their own and relied on others to help get through this trying time.

Outside Support. Perhaps the most surprising finding relates to new professionals seeking external support for issues within the job. A fair number of participants indicated that they (31% or $n=53$) leaned on friends and colleagues for support. These support systems may or may not have been found at their current institution, but did not include their direct supervisor. Many participants mentioned former professors or mentors from their graduate programs as providing guidance. Connecting with other new professionals also helped work through the transition, as illustrated by this quote from a new professional in residence life:

It was nice to not be the only first year RD last year. I connected with the other RD and we would debrief a lot about how we were feeling and how we were adjusting to the culture of a new institution.

Supervisor Assistance. The smallest number of respondents, a mere 12% ($n=21$), used their supervisor to work through any difficult transitional issues that they experienced in beginning their entry-level position. Those that did say their supervisor assisted them in working through shock stated that providing feedback, being a good listener, and being positive were crucial actions that supported their development. Below is an example.

I talked a lot of my feelings, processes, and ideas out with my supervisor, who was a great reflective listener. The listening really helped me to process my own thoughts and come up with my own solutions probably eight or nine times out of every ten issues I had.

While this quote does indicate that some supervisors do have supportive relationships with their supervisees, such a small number (12%) suggests it is likely that many new professionals do not utilize their supervisor for transition issues. It is conceivable that they do not feel supervisors understand or do not feel comfortable within the supervision relationship. Whatever the reason, this is a supervisory issue that warrants further examination.

Discussion and Implications

Our findings support previous research while providing some valuable new information for professionals at every experience level to consider. These findings may be broken down into areas related to training, expectations, communication, and attrition.

Survey data shows a lack of training for new supervisors of professional staff. In spite of the fact that this issue was first suggested nearly 20 years ago (Harned & Murphy, 1998; Wood et al., 1985), many new supervisors still report receiving little or no training in this area, which echoes more recent literature by Jackson, Moneta, and Nelson (2009) and Hirt and Strayhorn (2011). While the lack of training may be explained by an assumed knowledge or comfort level, decreased availability of senior level professionals to provide the training, or some other reason, this oversight could have a trickle-down affect which impacts all professionals. Senior and mid-level staff members who hire individuals to supervise entry-level staff must be intentional in providing training specifically in the area of supervision to new supervisors.

The data also suggests that new professionals and their supervisors have different expectations related to performance and motivation. New professionals may see their first position as a step toward a career, focused more on developing their professional identity, while supervisors may expect more of an investment in the institution by the new professional. Responses suggest that candidates focus more on the theoretical rather than the practical when forming their expectations and making assumptions about their first position. They have a hard time dealing with the realities of the job, especially when what happens is not exactly as it was written in their textbooks or discussed in class. The connections are not always clear for new professionals to make, so perhaps supervisors need to be more intentional in verbalizing and demonstrating how theory ties into and informs practice.

Our results support the scholarship of Kuk, Cobb, and Forrest (2007) in that there is a mutual expectation that new professionals be agents of change. However, while professionals may wish to alter the status quo and create change early and often, doing so without proper knowledge can have a negative impact and is perceived poorly by supervisors. If supervisors prefer their entry-level staff understand the politics and history of an institution prior to action, it is imperative that those items be shared with staff early in their employment. If the issues mentioned are not addressed, differences in expectations may lead to gaps in communication and can erode the supervisor/supervisee relationship before it has a chance to fully develop.

Results also indicate that new professionals seek a relationship with a supervisor that is self-serving in nature. They expect a relationship that is focused on their career development with their supervisor providing unquestioned support of their decisions. A lack of this support causes a negative perception of criticism and may result in lack of trust from the new professional. While new staff members seem to desire feedback and mentorship, if feedback is not provided regularly, or if it is not given in a sensitive manner, frustration can set in. If a supervisor is challenged with improving his or her staff members, constructive criticism and feedback are effective and necessary tools. New staff members need to be better equipped to handle this feedback, and supervisors need to be more aware of the manner in which this feedback is delivered. Either way, communication between supervisor and supervisee is important for the development of both parties. Yet, only 12% of the respondents indicated that they utilized their supervisor for support during difficult times on the job. If this is true, then more work needs to be done on the supervisory relationship.

These factors may lead a lack of employee perseverance and issues of attrition within the field of student affairs. Results suggest that new professionals experiencing difficulties and frustrations early in their career position are choosing to seek support outside of their supervisors. When they are not able to overcome their frustrations, some new professionals elect to leave a position rather than solve the issues at hand. If uncorrected, it stands to reason that this pattern could eventually lead to individuals leaving the profession entirely. Similarly, supervisors may become frustrated at a perceived inability to connect with new professionals. Finally, because of more frequent staff turnover (which could have been avoided), supervisors may also encounter additional stress and frustration related to having to recruit new staff members on a more regular basis due high staff turnover rates.

Limitations of Study

Our research includes several limitations. The manner in which participants were recruited (electronically through emails and list-servs, to individuals associated with ACPA,

NASPA, and related professional organizations) meant that those completing the instrument either needed direct access to the recruitment email or obtained it via another professional. Practitioners unassociated with these organizations may not be represented in the data. Also, the respondents were not evenly distributed among the functional areas. While survey did not target a specific functional area, housing and residence life professionals represented a significantly large portion of the respondents (39%).

It should be noted that these results are not generalizable to all supervisors but are useful in that they provide significant insight into the supervision experiences of new student affairs professionals and those that supervise this group. Our hope was to shed some light into this area and provide a set of recommendations for the profession. Although the sample was diverse with regard to the participants' demographics and level of supervision, the sample size was skewed with regard to functional area (residence life) and gender (62% female). As such, additional research could further explore and better account for these areas.

Conclusion

Responses from new professionals and their supervisors shed new light on the relationship between these two parties. There has been much research in the areas of supervision, but little related to this specific area within student affairs.

Implications for Practice

Based upon the results of this study, some key findings emerged which have implications on current practice. All of these major findings seem to focus around some aspect of self-awareness and are highlighted below:

Supervisor Readiness. Our findings suggest a disturbing pattern in the relationships between supervisors and new professionals. The majority of supervisors (54%) became supervisors because they felt they were ready for the challenge. While self-reflection may be a key aspect in a successful professional, the implication of ego cannot be ignored. These supervisors may experience challenges they are unprepared for, yet believe there is no need for improvement.

Politics and Ethics. The largest challenge in facing new professionals according to supervisors is the understanding of ethics and politics at an institution. Supervisors felt new professionals overestimated their grasp of this knowledge and sought to institute change prior to understanding the climate at the institution. It is possible the idea of self-awareness begins earlier in one's career, and new professionals simply exhibit the same traits as their supervisors.

Affirmation and Support. New professionals believe the relationship to their supervisors is essential for growth. They have expectations of guidance and career direction. They desire near unconditional support from supervisors and may take any perceived notion of criticism personally. This seems to contradict previous research regarding the confidence of new professionals. While they may believe they are self-aware, new professionals still require support, albeit on their own terms. Supervisors must adapt mutually acceptable techniques to reach new professionals. Similarly, new professionals need to be better equipped by deal with feedback and criticism, as it is a crucial part of the development process.

Supervisor Support During the Transition. Many new professionals experience transitional shock after taking on their first full time position. While these feelings may be considered routine by seasoned professionals, it is important that they are addressed and that new professionals are supported. Unfortunately, this study revealed that new professionals search for support outside of supervisors, and some respondents even left their position as a means of dealing with transitional issues. Supervisors would be wise to acknowledge this transitional shock and make a point of helping their new professionals work through it.

Recommendations

The results of this study indicate a number of areas related to the supervision of new professionals that require more attention. Clearly, more focus needs to be placed on better preparing supervisors for the challenges of working with the new student affairs professional. It should not be assumed that individuals know how to supervise professional staff, and student affairs divisions should be much more intentional about training and preparing their staff for these challenges. Similarly, it is important that graduate preparation programs better prepare their students for a more realistic supervisory experience.

The supervision of entry-level staff is an art that continues to evolve. The opinions of those who supervise and those who are supervised that were shared in this study can help to inform the best course of action. Regardless of what method is used to supervise entry-level staff, it would benefit all parties involved (e.g., supervisors, supervisees, and the institutions themselves) to pay more attention to this crucial component in the development of student affairs professionals.

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Daniel W. Calhoun is an Assistant Professor and program coordinator of the M.Ed. in Higher Education Administration program at Georgia Southern University. His research is focused on the support and development of graduate students and new professionals, primarily related to mentorship, supervision, and technology. Dr. Calhoun is an active member of ACPA and currently serves on the directorate of the Commission for Professional Preparation.

Roger Mitch Nasser, Jr. is the Director of Residence Life at McKendree University and is a doctoral student in Higher Education at St. Louis University. Mr. Nasser is an active member of ACPA and has served on the directorate of the Commission for Housing and Residence Life, and the Standing Committee for Men and Masculinities.

The Organizational Commitment of Chief Housing Officers

By

Curtis Erwin and Brenda L. H. Marina

Abstract

The purposes of this study was to (1) examine the extent that locus of control influences the organizational commitment of Chief Housing Officers and (2) review background factors such as gender, salary range, and institutional type Chief Housing Officers and any relationships related to level of locus of control and organizational commitment. The role of Chief Housing Officers requires a wide array of skills, which include a multitude of daily job stressors. How a Chief Housing Officer manages these stressors has an impact on the success, and longevity of his or her career within the role. When organizational commitment is high, longevity is more likely and some particular level of success will be obtained. The level of locus of control a person has is related to their level of organizational commitment. Specifically, if an individual has a high sense of internal locus of control then the individual will experience a higher level of organizational commitment. Existing research examines the high attrition rates among workers in the student affairs field and the relation to level of organizational commitment. However, at the time of this study, there has been limited research that determines if such a relationship exists for Chief Housing Officers. In addition, there has been no specific research study that has examined the effects of locus of control on Chief Housing Officers' organizational commitment.

Introduction

The roles of University Chief Student Affairs Officers have undergone multiple changes, which include their roles increasing in complexity in regards to the skills needed for successful administration. Housing professionals often comprise one of the largest component within a Division of Student Affairs (Winston & Anchors, 1993). The Chief Housing Officer (CHO) serves as the primary administrator within Student Affairs that guides, directs, and ensures success in the wide range of services in University Housing units on a college campus. Sandeen (1991) predicted that as the needs on college campuses continue to change, the skills, abilities, and behavioral characteristics of chief administrators would also need to change. It has also been suggested that the high attrition rate of housing professionals is affected by the inherent long hours and stressful conditions within the student affairs profession (Lorden, 1998). In addition, job dissatisfaction and high levels of stress within the workplace for student affairs administrators affect satisfaction of life in general (Anderson, Guido-DiBrito, & Morrell, 2000). Boehman (2007) suggests that the high level of attrition rates for student affairs professionals may be a combination of low organizational commitment and the individual feeling devalued by their organization. A continued examination of personal (locus of control) attributes of Chief Housing Officers and the influence of those attributes on organizational commitment is needed to better understand the attrition rates of Chief Housing Officers.

By examining the Chief Housing Officer's organizational commitment in relation to locus of control, one may begin to understand the relationship between the two and allow for purposeful decision making that can increase the organizational commitment for Chief Housing

Officers. This work is timely as there has been minimal research conducted with Chief Student Affairs Officers related to the effects of locus of control on organizational commitment after the 1990's. At the time of this study, there has been no research examining locus of control and organizational commitment of Chief Housing Officers.

Literature

Initially, a new Student Affairs professional's primary reason for entering the field is the opportunity to interact with students (Anderson, Guido-Dibrito, & Morrel, 2000; Hunter, 1992; Lorden, 1998). Professionals who advance in this field and take on new positions and more responsibilities have less contact and less meaningful interactions with students on a daily basis. However, as a whole, professionals have a higher sense of job satisfaction and organizational commitment as they move up the organizational hierarchy (Frohman & Johnson, 1993). When compared within the university setting, those working in Student Affairs as the Chief Student Affairs officer feel as if they have less personal communication, are dissatisfied with their status, and unhappy with salary and fringe benefits when compared with others at the same employment level within the university setting (Trimble, Allen, & Vidoni, 1991; Harway, 1977). Consequently, attrition rates within Student Affairs have been reported to be as high as 61% (Lorden, 1998), which may suggest an inconsistency between the level of satisfaction generally reported by student affairs practitioners and their actual commitment to the profession.

Regardless of the type of work, a worker's perceptions and attitudes about his or her employment have various consequences for the individual and their level of organizational commitment (Steward, Patterson, Morales, Bartell, Dinas, & Powers, 1995). One such perception is locus of control as introduced by Rotter (1954). Locus of control refers to the degree to which an individual believes the occurrence of reinforcements is reliant on his or her own behavior (Rotter, 1966).

Rotter (1966) investigated a person's expectancy and to what degree it may influence reinforcements received. At one extreme are persons who believe that reinforcements are a result of fate or luck (external locus of control) and at the other extreme are persons who believe reinforcements are a result of one's own behavior (internal locus of control). A person who has an external locus of control believes they have little control over the variables that affect their personal and work experiences and usually have a lower level of organizational commitment. Conversely, a person with a high internal locus of control believes they have significant control on the outcomes related to their experiences (Rotter, 1966).

The concept of locus of control has been examined and determined to have an impact on role ambiguity and conflict, as well as an impact on the work environment being viewed as threatening or stressful (Spector & O'Connell, 1994). In addition, it has been shown that those with a higher level of satisfaction and internal locus of control have lower levels of attrition rates when compared to their counterparts (Tarver, Canada, & Lim, 1999; Spector, 1982). Studies have shown the importance of a person's perception and attitude about his or her job has consequences on the individual's overall commitment and satisfaction (Locke, 1983; Sigelman & Shaffer, 1995; Loscocco & Roschelle, 1991; and Spector & O'Connell, 1994). These studies indicate that locus of control is a primary component within an individual's personality that affects organizational commitment.

Methodology

Our intended purpose was to (1) examine the extent that locus of control influences the organizational commitment of Chief Housing Officers and (2) look at background factors (gender, salary, type of institution, etc.) of Chief Housing Officers and any relationships to level of locus of control and organizational commitment. We gathered data that examined an individual's organizational commitment and locus of control from Chief Housing Officers working at public and private institutions within the United States as identified through the Association of College of University Housing Officers – International (ACUHO-I). ACUHO-I is the primary overarching organization for university housing, which strives to advance exceptional residential experiences at colleges, universities, and other post-secondary institutions. To accomplish our purpose, the following research questions (RQ) and null hypotheses (H_0) were used:

- RQ1: To what extent does locus of control influence organizational commitment of Chief Housing Officers? H_{01} : There will be no relationship in level of locus of control and level of organizational commitment for Chief Housing Officers.
- RQ2: To what extent do background factors (gender, salary range, housing capacity, race, institutional funding type, years as a CHO, and generational grouping) influence organizational commitment of Chief Housing Officers? H_{02} : There will be no relationship between background factors and the level of organizational commitment of Chief Housing Officers.
- RQ3: To what extent do background factors (gender, salary range, housing capacity, race, institutional funding type, years as a CHO, and generational grouping) influence locus of control of Chief Housing Officers? H_{03} : There will be no relationship between background factors and locus of control of Chief Housing Officers.

Instrumentation

One survey instrument was a combination of two established instruments with proven validity and reliability. Organizational commitment was measured by utilizing the Three-Component Model (TCM) Employee Commitment Survey (Meyer & Allen, 2004). The TCM Employee Commitment Survey is an 18 item instrument that measures three forms of employee commitment to the organization: desire-based (affective commitment), obligation-based (normative commitment) and cost-based (continuance commitment). Participants responded to statements such as “I would be very happy to spend the rest of my career with this organization” (affective commitment scale), “it would be very hard for me to leave my organization right now, even if I wanted to” (continuance commitment scale), and “I think that people these days move from company to company too often” (normative commitment scale).

Locus of control was measured by utilizing the Work Locus of Control Scale (WLCS) (Spector, 1988). The WLCS is a 16 item instrument that measures control beliefs in the workplace and places the individual on a continuum from internal locus of control to external locus of control. Participants responded to questions such as “If employees are unhappy with a decision made by their boss, they should do something about it” (internal locus of control) and “in order to get a really good job, you need to have family members or friends in high places” (external locus of control).

Each question was answered on the following six point Likert scale: Strongly Agree, Agree, Slightly Agree, Slightly Disagree, Disagree, and Strongly Disagree.

Combining the two instruments, we created an on-line titled "Organizational Control and Locus of Control of Chief Housing Officers." Our survey consists of three sections: commitment scale, work locus of control scale, and personal information. Embedded within the survey was the informed consent form that had to be acknowledged before completing the survey. Section I of the survey instrument gathered information related to organizational commitment and Section II of the survey instrument gathered information related to locus of control. Information on selected demographic variables was collected in Part III of the survey.

Population and Sample

The Chief Housing Officer is defined as the person who is the top administrator with responsibilities within the organization in charge of on-campus housing. Chief Housing Officers in the United States served as the population for this study. While at some institutions the role of Chief Housing Officer may be combined with other roles on campus within student affairs, (Dean of Students, Judicial Affairs, etc.) there are persons at each institution who assume these roles that provide leadership for housing functions. We utilized the membership directory of the Association of College and University Housing Officers – International (ACUHO-I) to identify Chief Housing Officers in the United States that served as the overall population. There are over 1,100 member institutions within ACUHO-I from thirteen regions.

Although this is an international organization, only personnel employed in American colleges and universities were included in the sample for the research study. To provide a national perspective we sought participation from the persons identified as the Chief Housing Officer at 801 member institutions in the United States. The sample population came from eight of the thirteen regions that make up the entire population. The five regions not surveyed were the international colleges and universities.

Data Collection

According to Nardi (2003), on-line gathering of data is a valid way of distributing self-administered surveys. We emailed all 801 identified Chief Housing Officers the link to the on-line survey with a cover letter stating the purpose of the research, the process of completing the on-line survey, information related to confidentiality and the consent process. There were 352 returned surveys. Accounting for 23 undeliverable email addresses, a 45.2% response rate was obtained. Utilizing a 95% probability level, a confidence interval of +/- 3.91 percentage points was achieved. Achieving this confidence level decreases the likelihood of a Type I error where the null hypothesis is rejected even though the hypothesis is true and decreases the likelihood of a Type II error when the null hypothesis is accepted even when the hypothesis is false (Bartz, 1999).

Data Analysis

We used SAS® to analyze data obtained from the Likert-scale survey instrument responses. Pearson's Correlation and a multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) were utilized to examine research question 1 since the data consisted of multiple dependent variables. Utilizing a MANOVA identified if there were any effects on the dependent variables when the

independent variable was examined. Comparisons and relationships of these groupings were examined. We took the Work Locus of Control scale and created groupings since the independent variable was continuous. This was done by examining the total distribution of the respondents. By taking the total mean (39.09) of the locus of control scale and adding one standard deviation (8.10) a mean of 47.19 was obtained for those with a high external locus of control. Likewise, by taking the mean (39.09) and subtracting one standard deviation (8.10) a mean of 30.99 was obtained for those with a high internal locus of control. Within SAS®, we ran a General Linear Model (GLM) which is a procedure that firsts runs individual analysis of variance (ANOVA) and then multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVAs) for corresponding data. Pearson's Correlation was utilized to examine research questions 2 and 3 since the questions were aimed at determining the relationship between the variables.

The background information/personal variables were treated differently from the responses related to the organizational commitment scale and locus of control scale. Scores on the personal information section were assigned codes downloaded to SAS® (i.e. for institutional funding status, public was assigned a specific identifying code and private was assigned a different identifying code). SAS® assigned numeric values to each response category of each Likert-scaled question response, establishing a code for each variable. SAS® generated frequency distributions of categorized data, means, and standard deviations (Bartz, 1999 and Nardi, 2003).

We were able to draw conclusions on the locus of control's relationship to organizational commitment of Chief Housing Officers from the data collected and the inferential statistics. However, we were unable to check to see if the respondents were representative of the membership population since no descriptive statistics existed for the population related to gender, race, type of institution, etc. Consistent results were identified through the analysis enabling us to answer each proposed research question.

Discussion of Findings

From part I and part II of the survey, means and standard deviation for the three sub-areas of the commitment scale (affective, normative, and continuance) and the locus of control scale were established (Table 1).

Table 1 Means and Standard Deviations for Locus of Control and Commitment Scales

| Scale | N | Mean | Standard Deviation |
|------------------------|-----|-------|--------------------|
| Work Locus of Control | 350 | 39.09 | 8.10 |
| Affective Commitment | 350 | 26.62 | 5.79 |
| Normative Commitment | 350 | 23.30 | 5.76 |
| Continuance Commitment | 350 | 21.19 | 5.18 |

Chief Housing Officers in this sample have a locus of control very similar to the United States norm. In addition, we designated these separate categories of locus of control for those respondents completing the survey so the independent variable would be categorical and a MANOVA could be utilized.

Table 2 presents the means and standard deviations for each of the three sub-commitment scales (affective commitment, normative commitment, continuance commitment) by each developed category of locus of control.

Table 2 Means and Standard Deviations of 3 Commitment Scales by Level of Locus of Control

| Work Locus of Control | N | Commitment Scales | Mean | Standard Deviation |
|----------------------------------|-----|-------------------|-------|--------------------|
| Higher Internal Locus of Control | 44 | Affective | 28.89 | 5.29 |
| | | Normative | 25.10 | 5.08 |
| | | Continuance | 19.05 | 5.52 |
| Mid-range Locus of Control | 254 | Affective | 26.76 | 5.63 |
| | | Normative | 23.36 | 5.78 |
| | | Continuance | 21.10 | 4.97 |
| Higher External Locus of Control | 52 | Affective | 24.04 | 6.08 |
| | | Normative | 21.51 | 5.75 |
| | | Continuance | 23.44 | 5.11 |

It was noted that those with a higher internal locus of control had normative commitment as their second highest commitment area, while those with a higher external locus of control had continuance commitment as their second highest commitment area.

Correlations were run between all variables by means of Pearson Correlation Coefficients. There were significant correlations between locus of control and the affective, normative and continuance commitment scales. As Table 3 illustrates, there was a significant negative correlation between locus of control and affective commitment ($r = -.27$; $p < .0001$), meaning that a higher internal locus of control results in a higher level of affective commitment. Similarly, there was a significant positive correlation between locus of control and continuance commitment ($r = .25$; $p < .0001$), showing Chief Housing Officers who felt they control their own lives (internal locus of control) were also less likely to feel they *had* to stay with the organization (continuous commitment) out of lack of other opportunities or other perceived social and financial costs.

Table 3 Pearson Correlation* Between Locus of Control and Sub-Organizational Commitment Scales

| | Affective Commitment Scale | Normative Commitment Scale | Continuance Commitment Scale |
|-------------------------|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|---|
| Locus of Control | -0.26597 | -0.17146 | 0.24690 |
| | <.0001 | <0.01 | <.0001 |
| | N = 350 | N = 350 | N = 350 |

*Prob>(r) under H₀

In addition to testing the correlation between locus of control and the three sub-organizational commitment scales, we compared the overall effect of locus of control on organizational commitment and the effects of the three created levels of locus of control (internal, mid-range, and external) on organizational commitment as shown in Table 4. A multivariate analysis of variance was conducted using the Wilk's Lambda statistic to test the null hypothesis of no overall locus of control effect on the three sub-organizational commitment areas. The results of this test illustrate that the null hypothesis can be rejected since there is a significant difference between all categories of locus of control and organizational commitment. Regardless if a CHO had an internal, mid-range, or external locus of control, there was an effect on the organizational commitment for the Chief Housing Officer.

Table 4 MANOVA Test for H₀ on Overall Effect of Locus of Control Comparisons on Organizational Commitment

| Locus of Control | Wilks' Lambda | F Value | Num DF | Den DF | PR > F |
|-------------------------|----------------------|----------------|---------------|---------------|------------------|
| Overall | .8900 | 6.90 | 6 | 690 | <.0001 |
| Internal vs External | .8920 | 13.93 | 3 | 345 | <.0001 |
| Internal vs Mid-Range | .9603 | 4.75 | 3 | 345 | <.01 |
| Mid-Range vs External | .9406 | 7.26 | 3 | 345 | <.0001 |

To further examine in more detail another MANOVA was conducted to test the null hypothesis of no overall locus of control effect on each sub-organizational commitment area. A multivariate analysis of variance was conducted using the Wilk's Lambda statistic. The test examined the difference in the three sub-organizational commitment areas when compared with the three levels of locus of control. As shown in Table 5, the null hypothesis can be rejected at $p < .0001$ for no overall effect when comparing internal versus external locus of control for affective commitment and continuance commitment. The null hypothesis can be rejected at $p < .01$ for no overall effect when comparing internal versus external locus of control for normative commitment. The null hypothesis can be rejected at $p < .05$ for no overall effect when comparing internal versus mid-range of locus of control for affective commitment and continuance commitment. However, the null hypothesis could not be rejected for the same comparison when evaluating normative commitment. Examining mid-range versus external locus of control, the

null hypothesis can be rejected at $p < .01$ for both affective commitment and continuance commitment, and at $p < .05$ for normative commitment. These tests indicate that regardless to whether the locus of control is internal, external, or mid-range, does influence

Table 5 Contrast Follow-Up of MANOVA Test for H_0 on Sub-Groups of Organizational Commitment

| Scale (DV) | Locus of Control | Contrast Sum of Squares | F Value | Pr>F |
|------------------------------|------------------------|----------------------------|---------|--------|
| Affective Commitment Scale | | | | |
| | Internal vs. External | 560.296 | 17.49 | <.0001 |
| | Internal vs. Mid-Range | 171.075 | 5.34 | <.05 |
| | Mid-Range vs. External | 317.654 | 9.92 | <.01 |
| Continuance Commitment Scale | | | | |
| | Internal vs. External | 458.046 | 17.89 | <.0001 |
| | Internal vs. Mid-Range | 157.393 | 6.15 | <.05 |
| | Mid-Range vs. External | 235.399 | 9.20 | <.01 |
| Normative Commitment Scale | | | | |
| | Internal vs. External | 307.232 | 9.48 | <.01 |
| | Internal vs. Mid-Range | 114.183 | 3.52 | .0614 |
| | Mid-Range vs. External | 147.009 | 4.53 | <.05 |

organizational commitment is influenced for the Chief Housing Officers who responded to the survey, the only exception being when comparing internal versus mid-range locus of control with normative commitment.

We sought to determine to what extent background factors (gender, years in profession, type of institution, etc.) influence organizational commitment of Chief Housing Officers. Question 2 was analyzed by looking at correlations between the background factors and the sub-categories of organizational commitment. Correlations were run between background/personal variables and the three sub-areas of organizational commitment (affective, normative, continuance) by means of Pearson Correlation Coefficients.

A significant positive correlations exists between affective commitment and range of salary ($r = .25$; $p < .0001$), housing capacity ($r = .23$; $p < .0001$), and to a lesser degree there were significant positive correlations between affective commitment and institutional funding source ($r = .14$; $p < .01$) and number of years as a Chief Housing Officer ($r = .20$; $p < .001$). In addition, there were significant negative correlations between affective commitment and generational grouping ($r = -.27$; $p < .0001$) and to a lesser degree there was a significant negative correlation between affective commitment and race ($r = .17$; $p < .01$) of the Chief Housing Officer. There were significant positive correlations between normative commitment and salary ($r = .12$; $p < .05$) and housing capacity ($r = .13$; $p < .05$) and negative correlations between normative commitment and generation year grouping ($r = -.19$; $p < .001$). Finally, there were negative correlations between continuance commitment and gender ($r = -.18$; $p < .01$), salary range ($r = -.14$; $p < .05$), and race ($r = -.13$; $p < .05$).

In relation to affective commitment, Table 6 demonstrates how salary changes affected the level of affective commitment. This was not the same for continuance or normative commitment, in fact the relationship was negative; continuance and normative commitment scores decreased as salaries increased.

Table 6 Pearson Correlations Statistics Between Three Areas of Organizational Commitment, Locus of Control, and Background Factors

| | AC S | CC S | NC S | WLO C | Gende r | Salar y | Capacit y | Rac e | Fundin g | Exp . | Gen . |
|--|------------------|------------------|------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|------------------|-------------------|
| Affective Commitmen t Scale | - | .00 | .66 ^a | -.27 ^a | -.09 | .25 ^a | .23 ^a | -.17 ^c | .14 ^c | .20 ^b | -.27 ^a |
| Continuance Commitmen t Scale | .00 | - | .24 ^a | .25 ^a | -.18 ^c | -.14 ^d | -.10 | .13 ^d | -.02 | .04 | .01 |
| Normative Commitmen t Scale | .66 ^a | .24 ^a | - | -.17 ^c | -.11 | .12 ^d | .13 ^d | -.11 | .10 | .07 | -.19 ^b |
| Work Locus of Control | - | .25 ^a | - | - | .03 | -.20 ^b | -.13 ^d | .03 | -.06 | .03 | .12 ^d |
| Gender | -.09 | - | -.11 | .03 | - | .08 | .07 | .08 | -.01 | .03 | .02 |
| Salary Range | .25 ^d | - | .12 | -.20 ^b | .08 | - | .72 ^a | -.06 | .30 ^a | .40 ^a | -.54 ^a |
| Housing Capacity | .23 ^a | -.10 | .13 ^d | -.13 ^d | .07 | .71 ^a | - | -.09 | .30 ^a | .22 ^a | -.38 ^a |
| Ethnicity/Ra ce | - | - | -.11 | .03 | .08 | -.06 | -.09 | - | .00 | -.04 | .08 |
| Inst. Funding Source | .17 ^c | .13 ^d | | | | | | | | | |
| Years Experience as CHO | .14 ^c | -.02 | .10 | -.06 | -.01 | .30 ^a | .30 ^a | .00 | - | .17 ^c | -.27 ^a |
| Generational Grouping | .20 ^b | .04 | .07 | .03 | .03 | .40 ^a | .22 ^a | -.04 | .17 ^c | - | -.57 ^a |
| | .27 ^a | .01 | - | .12 ^d | .02 | -.54 ^a | -.38 ^a | .08 | -.27 ^a | - | - |
| | | | .19 ^b | | | | | | | .57 ^a | |

^ap < .0001

^bp < .001

^cp < .01

^dp < .05

And finally, the groupings of White and Hispanic/Latino had a higher level of affective commitment than other ethnicities. Black Chief Housing Officers were significantly lower in levels of affective commitment than all other races of Chief Housing Officers. Again, these study results indicate that when comparing Black, White, and Hispanic or Latino Chief Housing Officers, Black Chief Housing Officers are less likely to exhibit a commitment level that is based upon desire.

In relation to continuance commitment, Chief Housing Officers making less than \$50,000 had a higher level of continuance commitment than other salary ranges while female Chief Housing Officers also experienced the same higher level of continuance commitment. In addition, female Chief Housing Officers scored a higher score on all three sub- areas of organizational commitment and for a higher internal locus of control, although this difference was only significant in the sub-category of continuance commitment. And finally, relative to commitment, the older the Chief Housing Officer the more likely they were to believe they *ought* to stay with the organization. This also held true to some degree related to salary range and responsibility related to housing capacity.

We sought to determine to what extent background factors (gender, years in profession, type of institution, etc.) influence locus of control of Chief Housing by looking at correlations between the background factors and locus of control. There was a significant negative correlation between locus of control and salary range ($r = -.20$; $p < .001$) and housing capacity ($r = -.13$; $p < .05$). In addition there was a significant positive correlation between locus of control and generation grouping ($r = .12$; $p < .05$). The more money earned by a Chief Housing Officers resulted in a higher level of internal locus of control. Higher internal locus of control levels also existed for those Chief Housing Officers with more responsibility related to housing capacity and of an older age. This indicates that salary is a determining factor related to locus of control since salary is highly correlated with age ($r = -.54$; $p < .0001$) and housing capacity ($r = .72$; $p < .0001$).

In addition, we provide some information on the relationship between background factors. Pearson Correlation statistics revealed significant positive correlations between salary and housing capacity ($r = .72$; $p < .0001$); salary and public funding status ($r = .30$; $p < .0001$); salary and years' experience of a Chief Housing Officer ($r = .40$; $p < .0001$); housing capacity and public funding status ($r = .30$; $p < .0001$); housing capacity and years' experience of a Chief Housing Officer ($r = .22$; $p < .0001$); and public funding status and years' experience of a Chief Housing Officer ($r = .17$; $p < .01$). Pearson Correlation statistics also revealed significant negative correlations between salary and generation grouping ($r = -.54$; $p < .0001$), and housing capacity and generation grouping ($r = -.38$; $p < .0001$). These correlations are consistent with expectations but further validate that salary does increase for Chief Housing Officers as the amount of students responsible for increases, the longer one works as a Chief Housing Officer and working in a public institution versus a private institution. Also, the opportunity to be responsible for additional students (larger housing capacity) is a result of having more experience as a Chief Housing Officer ($r = .22$; $p < .0001$) and working at a public institution ($r = .30$; $p < .0001$).

Discussion

Regardless of type, locus of control did influence the level and type of organizational commitment of Chief Housing Officers. Chief Housing Officers with a higher orientation of internal locus of control were more likely to experience high levels of affective commitment (a desire based upon *want* and personal alignment with organizational goals) and normative commitment (a desire based upon *obligation* and moral responsibility with the organization). Chief Housing Officers with a higher orientation of external locus of control were more likely to experience high levels of continuance commitment (a desire based upon *having* to stay with the organization and feelings related to lack of opportunity and/or costs associated with leaving the organization). While Chief Housing Officers possessing either locus of control orientation showed affective commitment as their top type of commitment, those with an external locus of control showed continuance commitment as their next highest type of commitment and internal locus of control showed normative commitment as their highest type of commitment.

High affective commitment correlated with many of the investigated personal variables. Affective commitment increased if the Chief Housing Officer earned a higher salary, was responsible for a larger housing inventory of beds, was White or Latino, worked at a public institution, and had more experience as a Chief Housing Officer. It should also be noted that those self-identifying as Black Chief Housing Officers had the lowest level of affective commitment when looking at race. High continuance commitment correlated with salary, and gender. Earning the least amount of money and being female increased the chances of having a higher level of continuance commitment. The older the Chief Housing Officer the more likely they were to have a high level of normative commitment. In addition, locus of control correlated with the personal variables of age, salary, and housing capacity. Internal locus of control increased as did the salary earned, the number of beds in the housing inventory, and the age of the Chief Housing Officer.

Meyer and Allen (1991) described affective commitment as an individual whose commitment level was based upon wanting to be with the organization and having personal alignment with organizational goals. We found that Chief Housing Officers who had an orientation toward internal locus of control were more likely to experience higher levels of affective commitment. This study aligns with past research conducted that demonstrated high levels of positive correlation between internal locus of control and affective commitment (McMahon, 2007; Spector, 1982; Coleman, Irving, & Cooper, 1999; and Luthans, Baack, & Taylor, 1987).

Some conjectures had to be made since most of the prior research focused on job satisfaction and organizational commitment or job satisfaction and locus of control, whereas this study examined organizational commitment and locus of control. Research has shown that increased job satisfaction is associated with stronger organizational commitment in Student Affairs professionals (Boehman, 2007; Bender, 1980; Blackhurst, Brandt, & Kalinowski, 1998; and Anderson, Guido-DiBrito, & Morrell, 2000) and research has shown internal locus of control correlates with increased job satisfaction (Locke, 1983; Spector, 1982; Tarver, Canada, & Lim, 1999). Chief Housing Officers who responded to this survey were more likely to have a high level of affective commitment if they had internal locus of control, higher salary, larger capacity of beds responsible, were White or Latino, work at a public institution, have had more experience as a Chief Housing Officer, and were older in age.

We found that those Chief Housing Officers with orientations of external locus of control had higher levels of continuance commitment corresponding with past studies (Spector, 1982; Coleman, Irving, and Cooper, 1999). Women had higher scores for all three types of organizational commitment and internal locus of control; however, these differences were only significant in relation to continuance commitment. Continuance commitment is the least desirable form of commitment from an employment standpoint (Meyer & Allen, 1991). This finding aligns with research that showed Chief Student Affairs Officers who were female were less satisfied than male colleagues with their position and profession (Bender, 1980).

Research conducted by Jones (2002) showed that job satisfaction of Chief Housing Officers correlated with being male, white, older, higher pay, working at larger institutions, public institutions, and more experience. In this study, affective commitment (the most desirable form of organizational commitment) of Chief Housing Officers significantly correlated with higher salary, larger inventory of beds (which indicates larger institution), White, public institution, and more experience.

Earlier research concluded that persons who remain with an organization for extended periods of time do so because of a moral compass (Marsh & Mannari, 1972) and that internalized normative pressure may cause a person to behave in such a way without thought towards personal benefits (Wiener, 1982). Here we concluded that the older the Chief Housing Officer the higher level of normative commitment (commitment based upon obligation and moral responsibility to the organization). Earlier research also suggested that persons may develop a sense of obligation to an organization over a long term of employment (Meyer, Stanley, Herscovitch, & Topolnysky, 2002). While we did not examine the length of time a Chief Housing Officer was with the same organization, we did look at the total years a person had been a Chief Housing Officer. The years of experience for a Chief Housing Officer did not correlate with normative commitment or continuance commitment but did correlate with affective commitment.

Prior research (Holmes, Verrier, & Chisholm, 1983) also indicated that the longer period an individual worked in Student Affairs at an institution of higher education, the lower their morale, feeling of value toward the institution, feeling connected to the University mission, and that these leaders were unlikely to leave the organization because of their years of service and commitment to the Student Affairs field. This study illustrated that years of experience and age of Chief Housing Officer correlated with affective commitment. Affective commitment is the strongest type of organizational commitment (Meyer & Allen, 1991) and is not characterized by descriptors of low morale, value, and lack of synergy with mission. In relation to how years of experience/longevity affect ones disposition, this research contradicts information provided by Holmes, Verrier, & Chisholm (1983). In addition, we saw a strong correlation between Chief Housing Officer age and normative commitment. While it cannot be assumed that age correlates with years of service, this study supports Holmes, Verrier, & Chisholm (1983) stance that persons may not leave an organization because of years of service.

Lastly, McMahon (2007) found that locus of control and age were related to affective commitment and that age was a significant predictor. This study illustrated that affective commitment also correlated with age being the personal descriptor that most correlated with affective commitment. We agree with McMahon and his finding that older individuals who believe their own actions are responsible for self-relevant outcomes, more frequently identify with and are involved with their organizations more so than younger individuals and those who had an external locus of control.

Implications and Recommendations

As a group, the Chief Housing Officers had a mean locus of control that was similar to the national mean as a whole. This was somewhat of a surprise since Chief Housing Officers are the top administrative leaders within their organization, and thus, we anticipated that being in control of one's outcome would possibly be higher than the general population. We contend that despite being the chief administrator of the housing organization, housing departments are a sub-group to a much larger division or institution, which may be where the feelings of not controlling one's outcomes originate.

This study illustrates there are certain related background factors that correlate a Chief Housing Officer having higher levels of affective commitment. We did not intend to identify causality related to demographic characteristics. We do provide information on what indicators may suggest various levels of organizational commitment and locus of control. As an example, to some degree, institutions control pay scales which can impact internal locus of control and affective commitment. Making sure to allow Chief Housing Officers the opportunity to gain experience, learn from mistakes, and professionally develop is paramount since internal locus of control is correlated with age and affective commitment is correlated with age and experience. Upper administration with Chief Housing Officers who identify race as Black or two or more races should be particularly aware since the respondents of this group showed the lowest levels of affective commitment. In addition, similar concerns exist for Chief Housing Officers who are female. Providing opportunities where Black, bi-racial, and women Chief Housing Officers control their outcomes is important in developing internal locus of control and affective commitment; especially for female Chief Housing Officers since female Chief Housing Officers showed a higher level of continuous commitment.

It was disappointing to learn that only 10.3% of respondents identified self as non-white. This is particularly alarming for a field that serves such a diverse level of students and espouses the importance of diversity education and related opportunities for diverse populations. Also, almost 30% of Chief Housing Officers who responded earned less than \$60,000 which the researcher found surprising since this low salary does not correspond to a role that is considered an upper administrative position and a position that requires such a wide variety of skills and knowledge areas. The survey results confirmed the researchers' beliefs that Chief Housing Officers as a whole (64%) were on the lower end of experience (less than 10 years).

We encourage the following recommendations to be considered and provide suggestions for future research:

- Existing Chief Housing Officers should be given the opportunity to identify their own level of locus of control and to examine how this personal construct influences their actions and perceived commitment to the organization and institution. Providing opportunities that help the Chief Housing Officer see their role in the larger picture and to see what areas they control internally and externally will help originate an accurate picture of what is and can be. In addition, encouraging processes that allow the Chief Housing Officer to evaluate and assess a situation when it is done and identifying those internal processes of a situation to accurately categorize those things they internally control and those objects that were truly out of their control (supervisor mandates, university restrictions, etc.).

- Because there is a correlation between salary and affective commitment, continued vigor should be given to the issue of salaries and the Chief Housing Officer. Not doing so may foster bitterness within employees who compare their salary with other chief administrators who may be perceived as having less responsibilities or desired skills. This a potential hazard within the division and institution, which may result in strong individuals leaving the role of Chief Housing Officer and exploring other fields where these skills are valued.
- Student Affairs and Housing as professions should make sure they are developing underrepresented persons to become active professionals and Chief Housing Officers. Increasing the diversity make-up of the Chief Housing Officer role is important in an environment that serves diverse populations and is committed to social justice principles. In addition, administrators who currently supervise Chief Housing Officers that identify as Black, bi-racial, multi-racial, and/or female should spend additional time exploring their job experience. Asking questions, allowing for goal setting and accomplishment, and acknowledging successes will increase internal locus of control and affective commitment in these populations who, as a whole, are not identifying with these conditions.
- The length of time the Chief Housing Officer had been at their particular institution, marital status, and the most advanced degree obtained are other background factors that can increase the understanding of the relationship between locus of control and organizational commitment that were not included in this specific study.
- A qualitative approach to this topic would be beneficial. Examining what Chief Housing Officers feel would increase their internal locus of control would provide personal information related to the topic of locus control and the Chief Housing Officer experience. Answers to open-ended questions related to the three areas of organizational commitment would shed additional light on the personal experience of the Chief Housing Officer and where they had a particular inclination towards a certain type of organizational commitment.
- Additional research on what actions individuals can participate in that increase the likelihood of development of internal locus of control.

We recognize that the way one looks at their environment has a significant impact on their experience and commitment to the organization. In order to increase likelihood of success and prior to taking on the role of Chief Housing Officer, it will be important to gain an understanding of the organization and institution's goals, level of autonomy for the position, and available resources. All of these items will increase the likelihood of being empowered and having a sense of control of the outcomes of the overall experience (internal locus of control) and if established, the feelings of wanting to be in the current environment will increase (affective commitment).

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Curtis Erwin is the Executive Director of Residential Life and Housing at Virginia Commonwealth University. This includes directing the long-range planning and daily administration related to 5,700 beds within an urban campus setting. Curtis has worked in residential life and housing for 23 years. He completed his B.A. in Communication from Truman State University, his M.Ed. in College Student Personnel from Indiana University, and his Ed.D. in Educational Administration from Georgia Southern University. Curtis has presented numerous presentations focusing on organizational development and strategic planning within organizations dedicated to housing for university students.

Dr. Brenda Marina is an Associate Professor for Educational Leadership and Program Director for the Higher Education Administration programs at Georgia Southern University. She holds a doctorate degree in Secondary Education and a Master degree in Higher Education Administration. Dr. Marina previously worked in higher education administration as an assistant dean and an academic advisor. Dr. Marina's research interests include: Leadership though Mentoring, Women in Leadership, Multicultural Competence in Higher Education, and Global Education Issues. Dr. Marina holds professional affiliations at the state and national level and serves as a speaker and presenter for state, national, and international conferences on issues related to her research.

“It’s not to be discussed”: Safety, Acceptance, and Professional Development for LGBTQ Faculty at a Large Southeastern University

By

Jessie A. Barnett, Jessica L. Muilenburg, Corey W. Johnson and Jennifer Miracle

Abstract

Studies show that a discriminatory, unsafe university environment negatively impacts educators identifying as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, or queer. The purpose of this study was to describe perceptions of safety, acceptance, and professional development from LGBTQ faculty at a Southeastern university. LGBTQ faculty (n=21) completed an online survey with open-ended questions. Analysis of detailed responses using the constant comparative method resulted in six themes, including: Identity management in the work place, repercussions of identity disclosure on career trajectory, and lack of support from university administration. These themes are illustrated using participant data and then used to provide recommendations for change.

Underserved Groups in the Workplace

Research continues to highlight the issues that underserved groups face in the workplace. Renn (2010) indicates that attention has been paid to LGBTQ presence in the general workplace and to racial/ethnic and gender minority faculty presence in higher education, but little research exists to pointedly address perceptions of campus climate for LGBTQ faculty in the Southeastern United States. Extensive research exists about organizational and workplace diversity related to race, ethnicity, and gender (Chattopadhyay, Tluchowska, & George, 2004; Valenti & Rockett, 2008). However, the experiences of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ) individuals deserve increased focus. Lesbian, gay, and bisexual (LGB) employees comprise one of the most sizeable minority groups in the workforce yet are researched the least (Ragins, 2004). Burns and Krehley (2011) report that 15% to 43% of LGBT workers have experienced some form discrimination at work. Of that number, 7% to 41% suffered from verbal or physical abuse on the job, and up to 28% were passed over for a promotion because of their sexual orientation or identity.

An unfriendly or “chilly” climate is also shown to negatively affect the performance and morale of lesbian and gay employees (Badgett, Lee, Sears, & Ho, 2007; Bilimoria & Stewart, 2009; Renn, 2010). Employees working for organizations that encourage inclusive, diverse workplace settings are more productive and creative (Lantz, 2009). Perception of an employment organization as supportive toward various sexual orientations is related to increased job satisfaction and decreased anxiety for lesbian and gay employees (Griffeth & Hebl, 2002). The aims of this manuscript are to: 1) qualitatively analyze detailed open-ended responses for pervasive themes about professional and social issues faced by a sample of LGBTQ faculty at a large Southeastern university and 2) briefly report general descriptive trends of LGBTQ faculty’s perceptions of safety and acceptance at the university through a basic quantitative analysis.

Literature Review

Institutions of higher learning are not exempt from issues surrounding diversity and inclusion in the workplace. LGBTQ faculty have consistently described the campus workplace environments as hostile, uncomfortable, and promoting invisibility and encouraging concealment of sexual identities (Bilimoria & Stewart, 2009). Prejudices experienced in the campus setting due to sexual orientation, gender expression, and gender identity hinder LGBTQ faculty's ability to achieve career goals, construct productive mentoring relationships, and maintain supportive relationships with others (Rankin, 2005). According to Levine (1991), "Diversity is one of the largest, most urgent challenges facing higher education today. It is also one of the most difficult challenges colleges have ever faced" (p.4). Scisney-Matlock and Matlock (2001) posited that higher education settings are microcosms of society. Hill (1991) and Rosser (1990) add that it is the duty of higher education to lead the way for the rest of society with diversity initiatives. However, the meaning of "diversity" in higher education is in need of broader understanding.

During a recent poll, Freedman (2010), asked students and higher education professionals about the meaning of the term "diversity." Respondents most commonly selected the terms *racial*, *ethnic* and/or *gender* as pertaining to diversity's meaning. Reports like this illustrate that there is a lack of knowledge on lesbian and gay sexual identity as a form of diversity in higher education, even though gay and lesbian employees constitute a large and important minority group in the workplace (Huffman, Watrous-Rodriguez, & King, 2008; Ragins & Cornwell, 2001). The LGBTQ faculty group in higher education is so overlooked that studies about their careers, experiences, and identities remain "nearly absent" (Bilimoria & Stewart, 2009; Renn, 2010, p. 136). Those studies that do exist maintain that, despite some progressive changes, "many campuses remain challenging environments for LGBT community members" (Embrick, Walther, & Wickins, 2007; Zemsky & Sanlo, 2005). Individuals identifying as transgender, gay, and lesbian are often neglected by anti-discrimination laws in the workplace and continue to face discrimination daily (Pope, 2012). Therefore, it is particularly important to study workplace climate for LGBTQ faculty because "they may be especially vulnerable to bias, discrimination, and retaliation in the academic workplace" (Bilimoria & Stewart, 2009, p. 88). The current study investigates these topics at a large university in the Southeastern United States.

Research Methods

This university was chosen because it is similar in size, location and regional population characteristics to other universities in the Southeastern United States (Southern Colleges, 2011). The university is also similar in size and setting to 102 other large, four-year institutions that consist of a primarily residential undergraduate student body with at least 10,000 degree-seeking students (Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, 2010). The Institutional Review Board at the university granted permission to conduct this study. The research design for a larger study, from which this faculty data originated, was to collect both descriptive statistics and qualitative data about the campus climate for all people. Here we focus in on the faculty only. Informational electronic letters containing a link to the online survey were sent to university personnel through 17 diversity-focused campus listservs. Recipients were encouraged to pass the information on to other interested LGBTQ individuals, a non-probability recruiting technique called snowball sampling often used in harder to find populations (Castillo, 2009; Goodman, 1961). If a faculty member did not wish to participate, the individual simply did not

fill out the survey and likely deleted the email. Due to the snowball dissemination methods, the number of LGBTQ faculty members who were aware of the survey but chose not to participate cannot be determined. The sample consisted of 21 LGBTQ faculty members from 15 different academic departments. It is a slightly low but fair response rate given the 1732 total faculty members on the campus, of which an unknown number could identify as LGBTQ. The 25-30 minute survey was available online from February 2010 to April 2010. The survey was anonymous and participants' computer IP addresses were automatically stripped from all records.

Data Collection Methods

Our survey used a mixed methods approach to data collection; we included open-ended and free-response questions to obtain more explicit information on challenges and opportunities experienced by LGBTQ faculty at the university. Three open-ended questions asked faculty to provide detailed responses about safety on campus, challenges as a LGBTQ person at the university, and positive aspects of being a LGBTQ person at the university. Eight open-ended questions addressed faculty's awareness, use, and perceived impact of LGBTQ groups, resources, and diversity programs at the university.

The quantitative portion of this study included closed-ended items from an instrument used to assess the university campus climate for LGBTQ students in 2002 (Hill et al., 2002). This instrument included 38 items covering demographic information and perceptions safety and acceptance of LGBTQ identity on campus, in the university area, and in the workplace. Descriptive statistics were employed for this study because they simply describe the quantitative data and because the small sample size did not allow for inferential statistics (Weiss, 2012).

Data Analysis Procedures

STATA 10.0 and the SurveyGizmo reports tool were used to analyze the quantitative data for very basic descriptive trends such as percentages ("SurveyGizmo", 2011; StataCorp, 2007). The open-ended responses were analyzed using the constant comparative method often found in grounded theory methodology (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). One of the researchers read each participant's responses to the open-ended questions, assigned codes to the content, and compared each response set to the others until all content was coded. This researcher then worked to place the content into appropriate categories and discern major themes from the qualitative data, after which the other researchers confirmed the analysis. Demographic information about LGBTQ faculty participants precedes the thematic findings.

Participant Demographics

Sexual orientations of the 21 faculty respondents were as follows: gay (33.3%, n=7), lesbian (28.6%, n=6), bisexual (28.6%, n=6), queer (23.81%, n=5), and other (4.76%, n=1). Four of the faculty respondents self-identified using multiple descriptors for their sexual orientation. Participants also identified as a woman (57.14%, n=12), man (38.10%, n=8) and genderqueer (4.76%, n=1). The term genderqueer is used to express gender identity that may fall between male and female, may be neither male nor female, or both male and female (Beemyn, 2008). Respondents were White (80.9%), Black (4.76%), Native American (4.76%), Hispanic (4.76%) and

one chose not to select racial and/or ethnic identities (4.76%). The ages ranged from 29 to 59 years with an average age of 45.1 years.

Descriptive statistics derived from multiple-choice survey questions indicate that, due to sexual orientation and/or gender identity, the 21 faculty respondents described having experienced prejudice in social settings (35%), the work place (28%), when dealing with administrators (33%), and from other faculty (28%). Almost half (47.6%) reported being avoided or ignored on campus and 19.1% reported being verbally harassed due to sexual orientation or gender identity.

Findings: A Picture of LGBTQ Faculty Experiences

The qualitative data offer us detailed insight into the experiences of LGBTQ faculty respondents. Six themes were identified as important to faculty's professional lives from analyzing their detailed open-ended responses. These themes included: (1) anxiety about LGBTQ identity management in the workplace, (2) repercussions of disclosure/identity on career longevity and development, (3) lack of support from university administration. Other themes were: (4) positive awareness of LGBTQ students, (5) appreciation for a supportive gay community, and (6) defining diversity on campus.

LGBTQ Identity Management in the Workplace

Several closeted faculty members were unsure about coming out in the workplace due to their inability to control the trajectory of disclosed information. Faculty noted the challenges of "not knowing whether it's okay to come out." They were also unsure of "knowing to whom it is safe to disclose, when, and how." Some teaching faculty members noted the distinct challenge of managing their LGBTQ identities with two different groups: coworkers and students. One faculty member stated, "*It is a challenge* allowing others to view my true identity and teaching as an instructor without having my students find out."

Nearly one-half of faculty respondents reported not feeling comfortable or safe in their employment positions as well. They also observed that discomfort was not specifically related to expressions of outright hostility, but to a generally unsupportive undercurrent in the workplace environment. One respondent expressed the following perception of sexual orientation at the university: "It's not to be discussed and certainly not to be celebrated." According to LGBTQ faculty, LGBTQ identity has the potential to negatively impact one's work experience.

Repercussions of Identity on Career Longevity and Development

Over one-third of the faculty respondents feared that the act of disclosing their sexual orientation or gender identity, or their identity itself, would negatively impact their current career or future professional endeavors at the university. One respondent's fears were recently realized when another employee disclosed the faculty member's sexual orientation to a university dean in an attempt to prevent the respondent from receiving a promotion. Another respondent feared the impact of her disclosure on her evaluations. Some respondents relayed the fact that they did not know who to trust with their LGBTQ identity, and were particularly worried about tenure and promotion. This was displayed in the following passage: "as a gay untenured faculty member, there's always the fear that this will affect my promotion and tenure case."

While the work environment was seen as a challenging place for many respondents, two faculty members reported that they have not experienced anything unsafe or felt threatened in any way due to their sexual orientation or gender identity. One woman stated, "as a lesbian, I enjoy the same positive aspects of life at the university that I imagine I would enjoy if I were straight." Another faculty member considered himself "lucky to avoid discrimination [and] harassment, etc." on campus.

Still, other faculty members noted that certain colleagues were open and welcoming even when others were not, and that sometimes acceptance takes time. One faculty member described how his co-workers' spouses' apprehension about socializing with him and his husband decreased over time:

I'm out with all my coworkers and have never encountered any problems. We invite [the coworkers] to an annual social event at our home. Early on the husbands didn't come due to uneasy feelings about coming to a drinking event hosted by two gay men. Once the first one came and wasn't molested, raped, or recruited, the rest came and we've had no problems.

This experience speaks to the idea of what a "problem" is in terms of LGBTQ discrimination. Here, the participant represents a "problem" as outright discrimination and not the backhanded avoidance of socializing with a gay person. With time, however, even the husbands of this respondent's coworkers were able to change their behavior and attend work-related social events at this LGBTQ faculty member's home. Despite some faculty members finding support within select departmental communities, this is not typically the case with the university's administration.

Lack of Support from University Administration

Comments from faculty focused heavily on a lack of support from the university's administration. One-fifth of the faculty respondents indicated that the administration, trustees, and state legislature, "does not feel supportive of the needs or challenges of the LGBTQ community." Faculty highlighted general uncertainty about "how our university administrators and even college administrators would handle" issues of gender identity.

Six respondents received official responses from the university because of problems encountered due to sexual orientation or gender identity. Of those six, four reported the official university response to be "inadequate." One individual reported in detail that administrators were uncomfortable talking about issues related to sexual orientation, and the process of dealing with those administrators was one of the most difficult challenges she faced as a LGBTQ faculty member at the university.

Faculty members were particularly concerned with the lack of partner benefits at the university as well. In some cases the lack of equal benefits was equated with direct discrimination. This inequality even resulted in a respondent re-evaluating staying at the university. This is shown in the following excerpt:

As a faculty member, the biggest challenge here is that [the university] doesn't yet provide domestic partner benefits. This issue is the single-most important issue for my partner and I in considering whether we want to stay here or move elsewhere where same-sex partner benefits are available.

One faculty member viewed the administration from a more positive perspective. He reported that the presence of the LGBTQ office has "given me a sense that my identity matters to the administration- that they care enough about LGBTQ students and staff to fund such a place, particularly in the face of political resistance to it." Positivity is a shining light in the face of many negative experiences, and faculty take care to highlight other positive components of university life.

Positive Awareness of LGBTQ Students

Faculty members acknowledged the presence of LGBTQ students at the university in general, and conveyed a sense of enjoyment with "getting to work with students in a supportive role." Several faculty members observed that there appeared to be good support system for students, but faculty who taught students who identified as members of the LGBTQ community are aware of the challenges they face. Moreover, 25% of respondents mentioned referring students to the LGBTQ center for help and support dealing with difficult sexuality or gender issues. Of that number, one respondent appreciated the center "helping me support students."

Most faculty commended the university's LGBTQ center for supporting LGBTQ students. Several of the respondents mentioned incorporating the center's resources into teaching and relying on the center as a way to manage their own identity in the classroom...

Because of the LGBTQ office, I feel empowered to discuss the topic with my students without revealing my own sexuality. I primarily use the center for resources to draw on when teaching- by resources, I mean both the library and the people.

The LGBTQ center offered not only support for the faculty member's students, but indirectly for the faculty members themselves. It acted as a concrete symbol of support for the LGBTQ community on campus. Having a resource available on the institutional level allows faculty to talk about LGBTQ-related topics more freely and feel supported, a sentiment that carries through to the surrounding local LGBTQ community at large.

Appreciation for Supportive Local LGBTQ Community

The importance of a supportive LGBTQ community at the university and in the surrounding town was one of the most prominent positive comments from faculty, with the majority of respondents mentioning their appreciation...

I love the LGBTQ community on campus--in the [approximately] 10 years I've been here, I've seen it grow, become more inclusive, more thoughtful and sensitive about issues such as race and gender, and become a vibrant part of campus life.

Many faculty members indicated that the LGBTQ community's visibility on campus and within the town area is one of its most important features, but several faculty members noted difficulty locating the community when they first set out to get involved. Many faculty highlighted the fellowship they found "among other LGBTQ individuals" as the most important positive aspects of being LGBTQ at the university. Faculty also noted that, "increasingly, there is a substantial ally community."

Furthermore, 95% of the faculty respondents reported knowing that the university has an organization to support LGBTQ faculty and staff. Over 70% reported attending a program or event with the organization. Respondents saw the LGBTQ group as a resource for prospective hires, as a "force for change on campus," and a mechanism to "help create a feeling that the campus is for everyone." Faculty also noted the value of the group's leadership and socialization opportunities.

[The LGBTQ faculty and staff group] has been a major force in my experience of [the university], starting from the time I first moved to [the area]. It has provided me with rich opportunities, venues for activism (and success), and good friends.

While many faculty respondents positively commented about the group's resources and programs, several individuals explained why they were not personally involved with the group. The reasons included finding support from other people, frustration about the relatively small number of LGBTQ faculty who are active with the group, and a basic lack of time to spend socializing. One respondent mentioned that the group should be more sensitive to different levels of being "out" when advertising events. "I would never attend 'Queer' Happy Hour for example," but the individual would attend the event with a more subtle name. Creating and maintaining an inclusive LGBTQ community is extremely valuable to these faculty members, particularly when the in the definition of "diversity" on campus may not always include LGBTQ identity.

Defining "Diversity" on Campus

One hundred percent of respondents reported being aware of the presence of the university's institutional diversity office. Faculty respondents provided detailed comments about how they perceive "diversity" is defined on campus. While one respondent noted that the presence of an institutional diversity office "communicated that [the university] is open to addressing issues of diversity," the majority of respondents who brought up diversity expressed that the university "needs to get away from the idea that diversity means race or ethnicity." Faculty stated that the "queer community is not part of the 'diversity' in the [institutional diversity center]." Another faculty member perceived that the institutional diversity center does not intentionally neglect the LGBTQ community, but also does not make the LGBTQ community's needs a priority. Another respondent reported she found the institutional diversity center to be "extremely prejudiced against gays and lesbians." Faculty were frustrated with LGBTQ identity being overlooked as a component of institutional diversity. Additionally, some LGBTQ faculty members experienced discrimination when interacting with an office whose goal includes creating unity on campus through celebrating a variety of differences.

Discussion and Conclusions

The purpose of this paper is to examine and expose the experiences of LGBTQ faculty in the higher education environment. This study contributes to the growing literature about workplace inclusiveness by engaging with LGBTQ faculty in the Southeastern United States, an area with traditionally conservative political and social values (Katel, 2008). Themes generated during qualitative data analysis show that study participants express feelings of anxiety and uncertainty in their careers that reflect findings from studies of non-academic workplace environments (Badgett et al., 2007; Bilimoria & Stewart, 2009; Renn, 2010). The fear for job security was pervasive, and faculty respondents were particularly concerned with others' reactions to their sexuality disrupting the standard academic career advancement procedure.

Faculty's career longevity fears were bolstered by their perceptions of the university's administration as unsupportive and non-affirming of LGBTQ individuals. Lack of support from the university itself prevents some LGBTQ faculty members from maximizing their potential in the workplace. This not only stifles personal and professional growth, but it is detrimental to the university's overall capabilities and talent retention.

Ottenritter (2012) asserts that a supportive and encouraging environment is necessary for student retention in higher education. Many faculty members in the current study enjoy a supportive role toward LGBTQ students and work to make their college experience as positive as possible. Faculty is aware of the needs of LGBTQ students and works to address them, but the university refuses to extend the same hand to faculty. Universities who do not meet the needs of their faculty risk losing them to competing institutions that do offer what faculty are looking for. The majority of *Fortune 500* companies offer partner benefits to help retain talent within the company (Cadrain, 2008). The lack of partner benefits is one of the most major organizational support shortcomings noted by LGBTQ faculty participants in this study. Partner benefits are important for a "LGB supportive workplace" (Huffman, et al., 2008, p. 247). While support and understanding on the individual level of the workplace for LGBTQ employees is necessary, broader institutional support is also vital (Huffman, et al., 2008). LGBTQ faculty in this study lack not just the financial plus of partner benefits, they lack the clear message of institutional support and equality sent by a university that provides partner benefits.

A LGBTQ faculty member who does not feel comfortable in the workplace may seek fellowship with other LGBTQ and allied individuals. These relations are important because, "...interpersonal relations within a group have a spillover effect that affects individual relations outside the group" (Valenti & Rockett, 2008). Faculty members also appreciated their close-knit LGBTQ community. Social connectedness with like others is an important factor in the psychological wellbeing of LGB individuals (Detrie & Lease, 2007). Engaging with others who share the same stigmatized identity can help increase self-esteem, overall positivity, and creation and sharing of coping techniques (LeBeau & Jellison, 2009). While the LGBTQ community is perceived by most faculty to be welcoming, the notion that the university's main diversity office does not see sexuality as a major component of "diversity" troubled some faculty respondents. Faculty members noted that, although there is difficulty with simultaneously celebrating one group's commonalities and accepting differences between groups, diversity should be more than race. This is a particularly interesting and noteworthy finding, because this study was conducted in the South. Broader recognition of the meaning of the term "diversity" is key to improving the awareness of sexual minorities at the university. Celebration and exploration of differences are methods of creating a "people-friendly" workplace" (Huffman, 2008, p. 249).

Limitations

One limitation of this study is the small sample size ($n=21$), but 21 participants is deemed appropriate for the qualitative approach used in this inquiry. This small sample size may be indicative of the fear of responding to a survey about sexuality, but is more likely due to the small number of LGBTQ identified faculty on a campus. Additionally, the sample was accessed using electronic listserv announcements as well as snowball sampling, and therefore the participants may not necessarily reflect the larger lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer faculty community at the university. As is the case with self-reported data, the data is subject to response bias from memory issues or other issues that may result from social acceptability of identifying as LGBTQ. The data was collected via computers and participants were explicitly ensured of their anonymity and confidentiality, which may increase the validity and trustworthiness of the data gathered.

It is also important to note that each sub-group of the LGBTQ population has unique needs and experiences that are valuable in and of themselves inside and outside of the academy. For the purposes of this study, and the small sample size, the data were reported for the LGBTQ sample population as a whole instead of separating respondents identifying as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, or queer. It may be beneficial for subsequent researchers to recruit a larger participant group and investigate possible differences between groups.

Implications for Practice and Future Research

Over the years, countless organizations have learned about the effectiveness of participation and input from multiple organizational levels in creating and sustaining positive organizational change. This study offers insight into ways to help equalize the power differential that exists in the faculty work environment. The theoretical perspective of critical theory focuses on current social theory's insufficient response to social oppression and its inability to improve humanity (LeCompte & Preissle, 1993). LeCompte and Preissle's description of critical theory maintains that oppression results from concealed power as well as imbalance of power and information between groups. The primary goals of research employing critical theory are to reveal the origins of oppression, encourage understanding of reasons and repercussions of oppression, and support contribution in liberation (1993). This study works toward those goals by pulling back the curtain on oppression experienced by LGBTQ faculty, paving the way for further investigation, and providing recommendations for change.

Innovations emerge when "formal structures are made more flexible and responsive" (Olson, Eoyang, Beckhard, & Vaill, 2001, p. p. xxiv). In the highly bureaucratic world of large organizations such as universities, flexibility and responsiveness are often hard to come by and policy change is difficult to find (Brunner, 2005). While some say that top-down change reinforces the disconnected, bureaucratic nature of such an institution, the data from this study indicate that LGBTQ faculty would benefit personally and professionally from top-level support of their LGBTQ identities.

LGBTQ faculty participants in this study demonstrate phenomenal self-organizational abilities and drive for creating an inclusive, affirming community. The future of organizational change is in interactions between agents, not strictly top-down change (Olson, et al., 2001). The LGBTQ faculty community is an agent reaching out toward the university's influential policymakers in an attempt to connect new change with current operations, and top-down change

is necessary for formal LGBTQ equality. Working with the LGBTQ faculty community is an important component of change, because who better knows the community's needs than the community? There are many successful approaches to operating LGBT employee groups to improve organizational effectiveness (Githens & Aragon, 2009). Resources such as expert personnel, educational tools, and advocacy experience, can be used in collaboration with the university to implement policies that respond better to discrimination and promote equality for LGBT faculty in the workplace.

Faculty's pervasive fear for career longevity, particularly in terms of tenure and promotion tracks, should be addressed by the institution directly. This respondent group indicates that the LGBTQ faculty community is very active and supportive, yet LGBTQ faculty continue to fear for their academic futures. This signals that messages from the highest university administrators both affirming LGBTQ faculty as well as enacting equitable benefits and policies are necessary components for positive change at the university level. The fact that faculty do not feel supported by the university's administration, (in terms of equal partner benefits, inadequate "official" responses to LGBTQ-related incidents, and in one instance, the administration's inability to even converse appropriately about LGBTQ issues) is indicative of a systemic issue. Universities "have set rules and abide by them; it is often difficult and time consuming to make a change to policy" (Brunner, 2005, p. 11). However, the university has a duty to affirm the existence of LGBTQ faculty and collaborate with faculty to create a safe working environment. Institutional changes that positively impact all points of the minority faculty trajectory, from recruitment to tenuring, actively create an inclusive institution (Rosser, 1990). Extending full domestic partner benefits to LGBTQ faculty is essential. It is also vital that LGBTQ faculty have a clear method of not only reporting discrimination, but also receiving an effective response from the university. The difficulty of change is no excuse for a university continuing to underserve an underserved population, particularly when the LGBTQ faculty population is actively working as an agent of change.

Higher education and research studies are instruments of societal change, and administrative support for and collaboration with LGBTQ faculty in the workplace is vital to improving professional development, personal wellbeing, and the overall inclusivity of universities. The participants in this study clearly present issues that are imperative to address, but are ignored by universities every day. Researchers must continue studying the LGBTQ faculty experience on larger and more generalizable scales and using findings to build the case for necessary change. Universities must send a message to their employees that inequality is intolerable. This message involves acknowledging unequal treatment in workplace, implementing mechanisms of reporting maltreatment and reacting to it seriously, using inclusive language in all official literature and functions, granting equal benefits to LGBTQ faculty and their partners, and partnering with LGBTQ organizations on campus and nationwide to publicly support LGBTQ faculty.

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Jessie Barnett received her PhD in Health Promotion and Behavior from the University of Georgia with specializations in qualitative research methods and LGBTQ health and wellness. She is interested in research with the LGBTQ community, specifically looking at health disparities and successful health behavior change.

Dr. Jessica Legge Muilenburg is an Associate Professor in the Department of Health Promotion and Behavior in the College of Public Health at the University of Georgia. Her research interests include substance use and abuse, sexual health, and adolescent risky behaviors.

Dr. Corey W. Johnson is a Professor in the Department of Leadership, Education Administration and Policy's Qualitative Research program. He is also an affiliate faculty member for the Institute for Women's Studies. He teaches courses on social justice, gender and sexuality, qualitative data collection, ethnography and philosophy of science.

Jennifer Miracle was the Director of the University of Georgia's LGBT Resource Center from 2008 to 2013. She was also an active member of GLOBES, UGA's LGBTQ faculty and staff organization, and continues to represent and advocate for the LGBTQ community.

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